

Soviet foreign minister in Syria

DAMASCUS (R) — Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin flew to Damascus Friday after announcing with his U.S. counterpart James Baker that a Middle East peace conference between Israel and the Arabs would take place in Madrid on Oct. 30. Mr. Pankin praised Syria's support for the peace conference and said Moscow would work hard to make it a success.

"Syria had shown wisdom, flexibility and long vision in helping solve problems preventing the holding of the conference," Mr. Pankin said. "I decided with Mr. Baker during talks (in Israel) earlier today to issue invitations to the conference in Madrid on Oct. 30," Mr. Pankin said. Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharras, who welcomed Mr. Pankin at Damascus airport, said Madrid was a venue suggested by Syria as venue for the peace talks. Mr. Sharras accused Israel of still not saying a definite "yes" to peace efforts. "Arabs have done everything possible to facilitate the holding of the conference but Israel until this moment is still not making a clear 'yes' to the peace efforts," Mr. Sharras said. The Syrian foreign minister said Damascus believed the substance of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 meant that Israel should withdraw from the occupied Arab territories to establish a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region.

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Spain formally accepts peace conference

MADRID (R) — Spain Friday formally accepted a plan brokered by the United States and the Soviet Union to hold Middle East peace talks in Madrid from Oct. 30. "The Spanish government will do everything in its power to make this conference, which will take place in Madrid, a real instrument of peace between peoples to which it feels linked by so many historical, cultural and friendship ties," an official statement said. The conference venue was not yet known. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will visit Madrid Saturday, a U.S. official said. The official said Mr. Baker, en route to Washington from the Middle East, would meet Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez to discuss arrangements for the conference opening. He would spend a few hours in the Spanish capital. The choice of Madrid as the conference venue came as a complete surprise. News media, quoting diplomats and other sources, had reported for several days that the conference would be held in the Swiss city of Lausanne. U.S. officials said Lausanne had never been considered.

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Peace conference to begin in Madrid Oct. 30

Bush and Gorbachev issue invitations and plan to attend opening of parley Israel agrees to participate after lengthy talks with Baker and Soviet restoration of diplomatic relations after 24 years

Baker and Pankin make joint announcement of peace talks

Combined agency dispatches

THE UNITED STATES and the Soviet Union announced on Friday that they would invite Israel and the Arabs to a Middle East peace conference beginning Oct. 30 in Madrid, Spain.

"The road to peace will not be simple," U.S. Secretary of State James Baker said in a joint news conference with Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin in occupied Jerusalem. "Old suspicions will not disappear overnight."

In Washington and Moscow, presidential spokesmen announced that George Bush of the U.S. and Mikhail Gorbachev of the Soviet Union would be attending the talks.

"The president plans to be there to open this historic occasion," White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Friday.

Mr. Bush, in a statement released by the White House, said he was "extremely pleased" that invitations to the conference were being issued.

"I myself plan to be there to help open this historic gathering, one with the potential to bring true peace and security to the peoples of the area," the president said.

"As the invitation makes clear, the objective of the effort is nothing less than a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, to be achieved through a two-track approach of direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab states and Israel and the Palestinians based upon U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338," Mr. Bush said.

"Mikhail Gorbachev will take part in the Middle East peace conference in Madrid," said a Soviet spokesman in Moscow.

Gorbachev spokesman said earlier in the week that it would be logical for the two presidents to open the conference.

The Madrid talks are planned to bring together Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and representatives of the Palestinians.

The invitations were issued after Mr. Pankin renewed diplomatic ties between Israel and the Soviet Union, the price Israel had set for agreeing to Soviet co-sponsorship of the conference.

Mr. Baker said the invitations were in the process of being delivered, in the name of Mr. Bush and Mr. Gorbachev.

"This invitation offers the peoples in this region a pathway to ending an era of confrontation and it offers a basis for a new future," Mr. Baker said.

"The road to peace, and I think we both understand this exceedingly well, will not be simple... it will be extremely difficult with many problems, many hitches and probably many interruptions," he said.

"This invitation holds the hope of a new era in the Middle East. The hope of an era marked by acceptance not rejection, the hope of an era marked by dialogue not by violence, the hope of

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Soviet Union restores formal ties with Israel

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — The Soviet Union restored diplomatic relations with Israel Friday after a 24-year rupture.

The announcement came in a joint statement by Foreign Ministers Boris Pankin of the Soviet Union and David Levy of Israel after a hectic day of diplomatic activity tied to U.S. and Soviet efforts to induce Israel to attend a proposed Middle East peace conference.

The statement said the Soviet Union and Israel firmly believe that the reestablishment of diplomatic ties "fully serves the interests of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, the establishment of a lasting peace and stability in this region and further development of international cooperation."

At a news conference at his office, Mr. Levy linked the achievement to the efforts of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to convene Middle East peace talks.

He said Mr. Baker's efforts were "bearing fruit today... among them, our renewal of relations with the Soviet Union."

About an hour later, the United States and the Soviet Union announced that they are inviting Israel and the Arabs to peace talks in Madrid, Spain, on Oct. 30.

Israel has long insisted the

Soviet Union would have to restore ties with the Jewish state as a condition to participating in peace talks. The Soviets have promised to renew ties as soon as the date is set for the conference.

Moscow broke the ties after the 1967 war.

Mr. Levy said the renewal of relations will allow Israel to conduct a dialogue with the Soviet Union and discuss Middle East issues "openly, directly and not through other parties."

He also indicated Israel might use diplomatic relations to try to initiate Soviet political pressure on Syria.

Mr. Levy added that the two countries had established a joint committee on economic cooperation that will meet soon in Moscow and occupied Jerusalem.

The announcement on restoring ties said:

"In the interest of the two nations, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the state of Israel have decided to restore their diplomatic relations as of the day of the issuance of this joint statement and exchange diplomatic representations at the level of embassies."

"The two sides state their readiness to maintain their bilateral relations in accordance with the United Nations charter, 30.

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Jordan welcomes conference, says results more important

By P.V. Vivekanand with agency dispatches

AMMAN — Jordan welcomes the American-Soviet announcement that a Middle East peace conference will begin in Madrid, Spain, on Oct. 30 and hopes that the meeting will lead to a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, Information Minister Mahmoud Sharif said Friday.

While describing the choice of Madrid as the venue for the conference as a pleasant surprise and the Spanish capital as a "wonderful city," Mr. Sharif said, "What is more important is the substance and results" of the first direct Arab-Israeli peace talks after decades of conflict.

"We are only at the beginning of a tortuous road," the minister told the Jordan Times. "We hope that the road will lead to a just and lasting peace, including the restoration of the rights of the Palestinian people."

Asked whether he now expected a smooth process in the run-up to the

peace conference, Mr. Sharif referred to reports of last-minute snags posed by Israel, including a cabinet consideration on the issue scheduled for Sunday.

"We don't know whether these problems have been overcome," he said. "We have to wait and see."

It was not immediately known whether Jordan had actually received the conference invitation, issued jointly by U.S. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

The invitations were sent by the State Department in cables to U.S. embassies in each country. The embassies, in turn, were to deliver them to the foreign ministry of each invitee.

Information Minister Sharif spoke after U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin announced in occupied Jerusalem that president Bush and Gorbachev were issuing invitations to the Arabs and Israel to attend the peace conference.

A senior U.S. official said the Palestinian invitation had been given to senior Palestinian negotiator Faisal Al Hameidi who met Mr. Baker on all his visits. It was delivered by

U.S. consul Molly Williamson.

Mr. Hameidi said he welcomed the conference.

"We are happy that there is going to be a peace conference," he told reporters.

"Madrid is an historic city and it is close to us. It is also convenient because it has an office of the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) there."

Egypt also welcomed the invitation to the peace conference, and said it would pave the way to security and stability in the region.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharras said the agreement to hold a Middle East peace conference which will open a new door to peace, security and stability in the region.

"Egypt hopes all the parties concerned will cooperate and do their utmost to achieve the aim of a peaceful solution to the Palestinian issue, so as to have a comprehensive, permanent peace in the region."

In Vienna, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said he was ready for talks with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir about the peace conference.

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Shamir indicates his cabinet's approval for Israeli attendance

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir announced Friday that Israel will attend the Middle East peace conference the United States is seeking to set up.

"Israel will take part in the peace conference when and if it takes place," Mr. Shamir said on Israel Radio.

He said he would recommend to his cabinet that it agree to enter the peace conference "because I don't see a better alternative."

"Without negotiations we can never reach peace. This is the first time we have been given an opportunity to conduct negotiations as we wished... face-to-face, without preconditions, with our Arab neighbors," he said.

Mr. Shamir's remarks, to Israeli political correspondents, indicated that he saw cabinet approval as assured. He said he would decide by Saturday night whether to put it to the cabinet at its next scheduled session Sunday, or later.

Mr. Shamir made his remarks shortly after Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin signed accords renewing full diplomatic ties with Israel, the condition the Jewish state set for Moscow to co-sponsor the peace conference with Washington.

Mr. Shamir spoke after intensive talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who was on his eighth trip to the Middle East to set up the conference.

Earlier Mr. Shamir and Mr. Baker said problems remained to be settled. Only later did Mr. Shamir make a clear statement that Israel would attend the conference.

"There are many, many areas of agreement, there are some areas where in order to achieve a (peace) process it was impossible for us to reach agreement," Mr. Baker told reporters.

Mr. Baker said his talks were over and that it was now up to Israel to decide whether it would join its Arab neighbors at the conference.

"The discussions have been friendly and we have made much progress on most of the problems we have discussed," Mr. Shamir said.

"There are some questions that remained open. I will bring our conclusions, the conclusions of the discussions, before our government on one of its next sessions and the government will take a decision about the further steps of Israel in this regard."

Mr. Baker added: "These do not represent fundamental differences in the relationship between the United States and Israel, a relationship that is important not only to Israel but important and very important to the United States of America."

On Friday morning Mr. Baker obtained from Palestinian leaders a list of the delegates they want to send to the talks, and an obstacle appeared to arise because Mr.

Baker did not show the list to Shamir.

The Palestinians obligated Mr. Baker to keep the list secret so that Israel could not veto the names on it.

Asked about this, Mr. Shamir replied: "Mr. Baker said he got a list of Palestinians, (and) that they generally satisfy the demands we made."

"Generally I believe him, but as representatives of a state we cannot suffice with that and we will find the ways to check it" (the list).

Asked how, Mr. Shamir replied: "Trust us."

Mr. Levy, an advocate of the conference, also said he would recommend acceptance of the U.S. proposal at Sunday's cabinet meeting.

"I will recommend it, certainly, and not just me, also the prime minister. I have no doubt about it," Mr. Levy told reporters.

Mr. Baker said, "The names that were given to me this morning in the limited time we have had available to look at them... appear to my delegation to meet the parameters of the process."

Israel insists that the Palestinians at the conference are not members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and that they do not reside in occupied Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Shamir was asked whether he was disappointed at Syria's

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Sharon: U.S. wants to force Israel back to 1967 borders

OXFORD, England (Agencies) — Israeli Housing Minister Ariel Sharon Friday accused the United States of attempting to force Israel back into its 1967 borders as part of a Middle East peace initiative.

In a speech inaugurating the new building of the L'Chaim Society, a student group associated with the Hasidic Lubavitcher Movement, Mr. Sharon said the principal "danger" to the Western world lies in the "primitive, fanatic and murderous" government of Iran and the Arab World.

"The United States and the West are supporting these countries against Israel. If this is the faith of the 'new order,' I am beginning to wonder what was actually so bad in the old order. It is certainly neither a fair order nor a just order," Mr. Sharon said.

"It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the intention of the present American government is to shoehorn Israel back into the impossible 1967 borders," he added. "Forcing Israel into these borders will lead to its destruction."

The initiative undertaken by Secretary of State James Baker,

Mr. Sharon argued, would produce "not a peace conference, but a war conference."

His own policy of accelerated Jewish settlement in the occupied territories, he argued, was a sure guarantee against war.

In a discussion about disarmament in the Middle East, Mr. Sharon appeared to hint that Israel already possessed nuclear weapons — something that is widely believed but not acknowledged by the government.

"Those who are supposed to be Israel's allies and supporters have in fact adopted a policy of absolute acquiescence with the Arab claims against Israel," Mr. Sharon said in his speech.

"Heavy pressure is being exerted on Israel in order to force it to its knees," he said.

In remarks after his speech, Sharon denounced the peace process. "I would not call it a peace process. I would call it a war process," he said.

"We understand the importance of peace but I never saw anyone who thought that in order to get peace he should endanger the existence of his own people," Mr. Sharon said.

Mr. Sharon said there would be

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Mystery surrounds the final shape of Palestinian delegation

By Lammie K. Anderson
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Mystery surrounded the final composition of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East conference Friday as Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials insisted that the organization had not abandoned demands for the representation of Palestinians in the diaspora and Arab Eastern Jerusalem.

Judging by various and sometimes contradictory accounts of the PLO Central Council (PCC) resolutions, the PLO was yesterday still seeking a formula to reconcile American and Israeli terms for Palestinian representation with PCC conditions for inclusion of representatives from outside and inside the occupied territories, including Arab Jerusalem.

According to PLO officials in Tunis, the PCC resolutions, which have not been published in details yet, authorized Palestinian participation at the peace conference but did not drop the representation of the Palestinians in the diaspora and of East Jerusalem.

The PLO officials' assertions appeared to contradict reports that a list of names, exclusively drawn from the Israeli-occupied territories, had been handed over to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker Friday. The PLO officials contacted in Tunis refused to explain the contradiction but insisted there was no final list submitted to the Americans.

"No final list was handed to Mr. Baker, but the Palestinian delegation discussed with Mr. Baker

names which the American official found acceptable," a senior PLO official said.

Names of Palestinian delegates from the occupied territories, however, have been already leaked to news agencies and newspapers, in contradiction with a PLO decision in Tunis that the list be announced after the problem of representation of the Palestinians in the diaspora and Jerusalem was solved.

Palestinian sources close to the PLO said that there were two formulas that were being discussed to solve the problem. First, that Jordanians from Palestinian origin would be included in the Jordanian side of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. The second option is to form an advisory or technical committee that would include Palestinians from the diaspora — including a delegate or more from East Jerusalem.

Palestinian officials in Tunis declined to reveal details of how the negotiations over the issue were being conducted. But they insisted that the final list had not been conveyed to Mr. Baker at Friday's meeting in occupied Jerusalem with a Palestinian team.

They said that Mr. Baker has received a blue print of the PCC resolutions which reiterates the same principles outlined in the Palestine National Council (PNC) declaration issued last month in Algiers.

Officials contacted differed on their interpretation of the PCC resolutions. By Friday night there still appeared to be major differences in Tunis over the PCC deci-

sions. Some officials insisted that the resolutions stipulated an immediate halt to Israeli settlements and the representation of all Palestinians at the conference as two final conditions for Palestinian participation. Others said that it was a qualified acceptance.

Some even indicated that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has ignored the conditional acceptance and gave the green light to Palestinian Faisal Hameidi to convey the PLO's acceptance to Mr. Baker without consulting with the executive committee.

In the final analysis, however, despite the differences the PLO cannot backtrack on its decision to authorize of Palestinian participation, according to those PLO officials contacted by the Jordan Times.

The controversy over the issue had reached a point late Friday that Abdul Rahman Mallouk, the representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), was on the verge of resigning from the PLO Executive Committee, sources said.

Sources in Tunis said late Friday that the name of the Palestinian delegates will be published in Jerusalem's Al Fajr newspaper quoting a Palestinian spokesman. The sources did not reveal the names. Agencies said — the main obstacle to the peace conference has been Israel's insistence on vetting the Palestinian delegation to exclude the PLO.

Palestinians gave Mr. Baker names of some of their d-

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Text of Baker-Pankin announcement of Middle East peace conference in Madrid Oct. 30

THE FOLLOWING IS the text of the announcement by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin on issuing invitations to a Middle East peace conference in Madrid October 30:

Mr. Baker (begin by apologizing for holding the news conference so close to the Jewish Sabbath): "Today is an important day and I think that this is an important moment. An American secretary of state and a Soviet foreign minister are together in Jerusalem for

the first time in history. "What's more the Soviet Union has today restored full relations with Israel after a break of 24 years."

"But I think that our joint presence here today represents something more. Foreign Minister Pankin and I are pleased to announce that President Bush and President Gorbachev are today inviting Israel, Arab states, and Palestinians to attend a Middle East peace conference to be held beginning Oct. 30th in Madrid. That conference is to be followed by direct nego-

tiations designed to achieve real peace.

"We have witnessed new beginnings in other parts of the world. The negotiating process that we are seeking to launch with this invitation holds the hope of a new era in the Middle East. The hope of an era marked by acceptance and not by rejection, the hope of an era marked by dialogue and not by violence, the hope of an era marked by cooperation and not by conflict, and the hope of an era marked by hope itself and not

despair. "This invitation offers the peoples in this region a pathway to ending an era of confrontation and it offers a basis for a new future."

"The road to peace, and I think we both understand this exceedingly well, will not be simple. To the contrary, it will be extremely difficult with many problems, many hitches and probably many interruptions along the way. Old suspicions will not disappear quickly. The gaps are real and the gaps will not be easily overcome. So we have

no illusions about the hard work that lies ahead."

"But we take encouragement from the issuance of these invitations which is the product of work of the last eight months. As we have all along, we intend to take this one step at a time. And so if we receive positive responses to this invitation, we will be taking one more step forward toward achieving the peace and security that the peoples of the Middle East have so long been denied."

Mr. Pankin: "Ladies and gentlemen, Secretary of State

James Baker has just informed you of the joint Soviet-American statement. Therefore I have no other papers to read out to you. I can only say that I fully share what has just been said by Secretary Baker. However, I'd like to add a few comments.

"The stage that we have now come to represents a very important turning point for the entire situation in the Middle East. We have come a long way and we have come a long way together. We

made an important contribution to the convening of this conference in our capacity as future co-chairmen of the conference just as important contributions have been made by all the other sides in their hard and untiring efforts.

"We are convinced that history is now holding out an opportunity that we must not pass up. And I urge all the participants of the conference to take this opportunity."

"As has just been mentioned by Secretary Baker, we have restored full di-

plomatic relations... the state of Israel and... a joint Soviet-Israeli... together with my country... a statement Foreign Minister David Levy to that effect.

"I want to emphasize that this is a logical and natural step which is fully consistent with current reality. This step does not represent a present that we are making to each other or a new challenge. This step became possible because of and thanks to the considerable success in bringing the convening of the conference closer."

Barzani takes autonomy deal to Kurds

SHILADIZA, Iraq (R) — Kurdish rebel leader Massoud Barzani, casting aside his customary reserve, has taken to the road to drum up support for a peace and autonomy deal he has negotiated with the government.

Mr. Barzani, under pressure from veteran Kurdish nationalist Jalal Talabani, his chief rival for the hearts and minds of Iraq's Kurds, is touring north western Iraq preaching reconciliation.

"Since 1961 we have fought and sacrificed enough for autonomy 10 times over," he told 10,000 supporters in Shiladiza Thursday. "There is no point in fighting when we can win our rights through negotiations."

Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) leader Barzani, whose family has been at the forefront of the Kurdish nationalist struggle for two generations, brought his draft autonomy agreement back from Baghdad in mid-August.

It was the product of negotiations launched in April by Mr. Talabani shortly after the collapse of a post-Gulf war Kurdish rebellion.

But Mr. Talabani, who heads the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), immediately attacked Mr. Barzani's draft agreement, saying it surrendered Kurdish land and freedoms.

Differences between the two men, key members of the Kurdistan Front umbrella alliance, have brought negotiations with Baghdad to a halt, leaving Kurdistan balanced precariously between war and peace.

Shiladiza, target of Turkish planes hunting for separatist Kurds from Turkey last week, was Mr. Barzani's first stop on a tour that was expected to take in the KDP strongholds of Dohuk and Zakho.

About two dozen military and political officials from the Iraqi government, including the deputy governor of Dohuk province and

senior police and army officers, greeted Mr. Barzani in Shiladiza. "Right now we are looking for autonomy," he told the crowd. "No one can deny us as Kurds our right to self determination. Just as European peoples have that right, so do we."

Mr. Barzani said Kurds had an opportunity to achieve peacefully their political agenda, which he defined as autonomy for Kurdistan and democracy for Iraq.

Mr. Talabani, for his part, is testing support for Kurdish aspirations in an extended tour of Western countries.

The rivalry between the two, largely undeclared, was cast a shadow over the negotiations.

The agreement does not include key Kurdish areas such as the oil centre of Kirkuk and the towns of Kanaqin and Sinjar in the proposed autonomous region. It is also vague in its guarantee of Kurdish political rights.

Mr. Talabani sees these as fatal flaws. Mr. Barzani sees them as deficiencies to be worked out over time.

In a thinly-veiled dig at his rival, Mr. Barzani said: "The support of the Kurdish people is more important to me than all the support that Kurdistan is getting from the outside world."

The United States air force F-111's stationed in Turkey to deter Iraqi harassment of Kurds, meanwhile, put on a spectacular 20-minute display of low-level flying as Iraqi Kurds and Arabs alike waited for Mr. Barzani to arrive.

Rashed Hamid Ibrahim, chief of traffic police in Dohuk city, was one Iraqi official who stood for several hours waiting.

"I am happy to join in welcoming a leader who will sacrifice everything for autonomy and the Kurdish people," he said. "From reading the news and talking to the people, I feel that the autonomy negotiations have reached their final stages."

U.N. official: Iraq could resume nuclear programme

WASHINGTON (AP) — Iraq's nuclear know-how is so sophisticated that it could resume its shattered atomic weapons programme unless blocked by constant foreign inspections, a senior U.N. inspector told senators Thursday.

If the allied bombings had not interrupted its ambitious programme during the Gulf war, he testified, Iraq would have manufactured sufficient fuel for a nuclear bomb within 12 to 18 months.

The assessment was furnished by David Kay, the American deputy leader of the international inspection team that is searching out and destroying the Iraqi nuclear programme.

Mr. Kay, who works for the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) based in Vienna, reported to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee about his team's seven missions to Iraq in the past four months.

He said intelligence information provided by the United States and its allies has been invaluable to the United Nations' search.

Sen. John Glenn introduced a resolution that recommends systematic sharing of such information with the IAEA to bolster its efforts to block the spread of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Glenn also proposed denying business to any private U.S. or foreign company that takes part in the spread of such weapons.

Mr. Kay said Iraq is doing much to hide its nuclear facilities from ground inspectors and U.S. spy satellites.

"The number of deception strategies is impressive in its breadth and skill," he said.

Mr. Kay said there was "a very high probability that Iraq is still withholding information," particularly on its work to enrich uranium through gas centrifuges, its weapons designs and its international procurement network.

Although allied bombings disrupted Iraq's nuclear programme earlier this year, Mr. Kay said, "the know-how remains firmly in the hands of the Iraqi personnel who directed and carried out the programme."

He added: "Clearly, a long-term monitoring and verification programme of substantial intrusiveness must be maintained in Iraq to ensure that a clandestine programme does not restart."

A U.N. team is working in Iraq and an eighth mission is being prepared, he said.

Iraq has rejected a U.N. resolution adopted last week that calls for indefinite monitoring of Iraqi nuclear and military facilities. A U.S. official said that without Iraqi cooperation, the world community would have a hard time preventing resumption of the programme.

Asked if American firms had sold equipment to Iraq, Mr. Kay said there was "no region of the world that didn't contribute" to the Iraqi nuclear programme.

He said the company names will be given to the countries where they are registered and then to the U.N. Security Council, which will decide whether to make them public.

Mr. Kay said the IAEA also is investigating the complex web of financing for Iraq's acquisitions. A congressional source, who spoke on condition that he not be identified, said some European banks have urged the agency to keep such information secret so they can avoid embarrassment.

From all the material and documents unearthed so far, Mr. Kay asserted, Iraq's nuclear programme was clearly a threat to the entire region.

On eve of peace talks, Mideast is edgy, hostility is high

By Alan Elster
Routier

IT SHOULD BE a moment of jubilation, after 43 years of conflict and five wars, Israelis and Arabs are about to talk peace.

But throughout the Middle East, the mood is edgy and anxious, expectations are low, neither side trusts the other and both are digging into hardline positions.

The impression is that both Israel and Arab states are being dragged kicking and screaming to a peace conference more because they want to avoid offending the United States, the world's only superpower, than because of any real feeling of reconciliation.

Israel and the Arabs are entering the peace talks with conflicting aims. The Arabs want land, if possible all the land Israel has been occupying since 1967. In exchange, they are offering an end to the state of war they have maintained with Israel since 1948.

Mr. Shamir's government for its part wants to hold on to the land for religious and security reasons and dreams of a different kind of peace. It wants cultural and sporting exchanges with the Arab World, and trade and tourist links. In short, after four decades of being rejected as a cancerous growth in the heart of the Arab World, Israelis want to feel accepted.

Between the two sides is the United States which hopes to reconcile the differences with a formula of "land for peace." These, said Mr. Baker earlier this week, were the magic words.

Israelis felt they had a chance at acceptance when

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who has built his career on a refusal to cede "one clod of earth" of the territories occupied in the 1967 war, was said by the Israeli press to be gloomy as the conference approached.

Police Minister Ronni Milo, a confidant to Mr. Shamir, said Mr. Shamir's statement flashed a warning light for Israel.

"All these things raise at least a serious fear over whether there is a real interest to make peace, and if there is no such intention, then naturally we must be all the more cautious in all the processes we engage in," he told Israel Radio.

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former Egyptian President Anwar Sadat visited occupied Jerusalem in 1977, was received by an ecstatic Israeli public, shook the hands of bitter enemies like Israeli warrior-turned-politician Moshe Dayan, addressed Israel's parliament and called for a new era of Arab-Israeli friendship.

The wave of support for peace efforts that welled up among ordinary Israelis in those two giddy days sustained them through the difficult negotiations that followed until a peace treaty was signed in 1979.

This time, there is no such feeling in Israel, "Assad is no Sadat," said a commentary in Israel's top-selling newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth Thursday.

Israelis and Egyptians both feel disappointed with the peace they obtained in 1979, and this disappointment colours their suspicious attitude to the new peace moves.

Israelis feel they got a "cold peace," a peace without friendship. The Egyptians feel Israel exploited them to wage war on the Palestinians in Lebanon in 1982 and to crush the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories which erupted in December 1987.

As Mr. Baker arrived in Cairo earlier this week, Wajih Abou Zekri, a senior commentator in the newspaper Al Akhbar, wrote:

"During World War II, Stalin the communist, entered an alliance with Churchill the capitalist, to confront the Nazi threat. We hope that the Arabs will enter a similar alliance against their Zionist enemy."

Israel has lost trust in U.S., ambassador says

TEL AVIV (R) — The United States wants Israel to withdraw from nearly all territory it occupied in the 1967 war, Israel's Ambassador to Washington Zalmay Shoval said in an interview published Friday.

The Americans have said in the past they want Israel to return occupied land in exchange for peace with its Arab neighbours, but have never spelled out how much land Israel should give up.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has said repeatedly Israel would not return any Arab land, arguing it was either part of the "Biblical land of Israel" or vital for "security."

Israel occupied the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights in 1967. It annexed East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

Mr. Shoval, who has met frequently with U.S. officials in the past few months to negotiate terms for a Middle East peace conference, said the Americans are determined to push far-reaching Israeli concessions.

"The United States wants us to go back to the 1967 borders with minor adjustments and refuses to recognise the annexation of East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights," he said in an interview with the Maariv daily.

The interview was published as U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was meeting Israeli and Palestinian leaders to win final agreement for a peace conference.

U.S. policy has always backed U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 which urges withdrawal from the occupied territories in exchange for secure borders for every state in the region.

But Mr. Shoval said only the end of superpower competition and the new alliances shaped by the Gulf war have enabled Washington to push for Israeli concessions.

As a result of the tougher approach, Israel "has lost something of its trust" in the United States, Mr. Shoval said.

"We don't have the feeling that we can rely on the United States concerning issues that in the past were seen as vital in our eyes," Mr. Shoval said.

He cited the recent bitter disputes between Israel and Washington over Jewish settlements in the occupied lands, over the Israeli request for \$10 billion in U.S. loan guarantees for immigrant absorption and other issues.

"All these are not signs of proper relations," Mr. Shoval said. "But at the same time, we shouldn't exaggerate and describe the United States as hostile."

Mr. Shoval said Israel has some ways of influencing the U.S. administration, mainly through public opinion in the United States and through Congress, which is traditionally friendly to Israel.

"This gives Israel a certain room to manoeuvre," he said. But he noted that such attempts were not always successful. He cited the "embarrassment" of the Jewish lobby if it failed to convince Congress to battle against President George Bush's decision to delay the loan guarantees.

Poor workers pay heavy price for thriving 'visa business' in Kuwait

KUWAIT (R) — Yousef Ahmad took a Kuwaiti dinar from the pocket of his torn trousers. It was all the money he had.

Mr. Ahmad is one of thousands of Arabs and Asians who have been cheated by Kuwaitis who sold them visas for an average \$1,200 each and then abandoned them in the dusty streets of Kuwait.

Mr. Ahmad's sponsor said he would find him work in the emirate. "So I paid him in money for the visa and paid my plane ticket from Cairo. When I got here, the sponsor vanished."

"I have been living in the streets for two months. One day I find work, three days I don't," he added.

The 34-year-old Egyptian and thousands of other Arabs, Iranians and Asians wander the streets looking for work.

"I would do anything. Clean, move furniture, paint houses — anything, I need food in my stomach," a Bangladeshi told a Kuwaiti looking for people to clean his office.

The labourers said the police round them up from time to time and ask them to leave the country. Few have the fare home.

Selling visas to Arabs and Asians flourished in the first weeks after Kuwait was liberated from Iraqi occupation in February.

Foreigners who want to work in the emirate need a Kuwaiti sponsor to get them a visa and a job. Officials estimate some 100,000

labourers have entered the country on visas provided by Kuwaiti businessmen in return for money.

Any Kuwaiti who has a registered company can legally obtain visas for the foreign labourers he needs to hire. The visas are issued legally through embassies in different countries.

"Visa business" has become a scandal in Kuwait. Details have been kept out of the censored press but some editors have hinted at an official involvement.

"Visas are not sold in market places... they are issued by official departments... to cheat on one or two visas is possible, but cheating on thousands of visas poses a lot of questions," said Al Qabas daily in a recent editorial.

Arab diplomats and businessmen say Interior Minister Sheikh Ahmad Hamoud Al Jaber Al Sabah left Kuwait for two weeks in September and stopped issuing visas in protest at government reluctance to punish the "visa merchants."

"Now he is back and issuing visas again, but the compromise was that they have clamped down on this business in visas," one diplomat said.

Embassies now have to refer every visa application to the Interior Ministry in Kuwait City.

The diplomats said at least 70 local companies who were involved in the "visa business" were under investigation.

Many of the cheated labourers said they had to sell their few possessions to pay their way to Kuwait where they thought they

would make enough money to feed their families.

"I sold my land and my sheep in Egypt to come here. Now I don't have money here to send to my eight children. I am not even making enough money to feed myself," said 46-year-old Karim Abbas.

Most of the labourers sleep in run-down buildings where they share a room with at least 10 other people. They wake up at dawn to stand on the streets and wait for work.

Kuwaitis complain that they need foreign labour, but most of the workers who have been allowed into the country via the "visa business" are unskilled.

"There is a definite shortage in skilled labour especially after the Palestinians and Jordanians left. What has happened now is that there are thousands of workers, but no skills, all because of this visa scandal," one politician said.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who had lived in Kuwait for years either left the emirate or were deported because of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's support of Iraq in the Gulf war.

Kuwaitis are used to relying on cheap domestic labour from India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Bangladesh. But most domestic servants fled during the Iraqi occupation and have not been able to return because of restrictions imposed as a result of the visa scandal.

The government agreed late last month to open the way for their return.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Commander of PLO forces held in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AP) — Government troops arrested the commander of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) forces in Lebanon on charges of being in the country illegally, a police source said Thursday. The source, speaking on condition he not be further identified, said Colonel Ali Afandi was arrested Tuesday evening aboard a boat, shortly before it was scheduled to leave the port of Jounieh in the Christian heartland of Kesroun province north of Beirut. The army command and the PLO office in the southern refugee camp of Ain Al Hilweh withheld comment on the report. Mr. Afandi, 43, headed 6,000 hardcore PLO guerrillas in Lebanon before they were squeezed by government troops into refugee camps in South Lebanon early in July. The police source said Mr. Afandi was arrested on charges of illegal residence in Lebanon and resisting government troops. Further details were not available.

Italian premier apologises to Iran

ROME (R) — Italian Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti has apologised to Tehran for an egg-throwing attack on the Iranian ambassador, his office said Thursday. On Sunday, three men peeped Ambassador Hamid Aboutelebi with eggs filled with red ink as he prepared to receive a prize at an economic forum in Rimini on the Adriatic coast. "I trust this incident will not affect the good relations which exist between our two countries," Mr. Andreotti wrote in a letter sent Wednesday to Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati. Mr. Andreotti, whose face and hair were splattered in the attack, rejected an earlier apology from the head of protocol at the Italian presidency, the official Iranian news agency IRNA, said Monday. Citing "the apparent atmosphere of insecurity" in Italy, Iranian consulates in Rome and Milan stopped issuing visas, IRNA said.

Thais say Turkish banker died of drugs

BANGKOK (R) — A Turkish banker died of a heroin overdose while attending the World Bank-International Monetary Fund annual conference in Bangkok, Thai police said Thursday. Major General Tassana Suwanjutha, director general of the police institute of forensic medicine, told reporters that a post mortem found a lethal dose of heroin in the banker's blood. Yavuz Yavuz, the 31-year-old general manager of Turkey's Denizbank, was found dead in his room at Bangkok's Ambassador Hotel Wednesday night. Turkish Ambassador to Thailand Erdinc Karasapan said he doubted very much if Mr. Yavuz had died of an overdose. "He was taken ill on Monday night with a headache and spent one night in hospital then he was released," the diplomat said. "There was no indication of any drug taking." He said he was waiting to see the official post mortem report. Another Turkish delegate to the meeting was in hospital suffering from a blood clot to the brain, IMF officials said. Ali Kaplan, general manager of Tekstilbank, had complained of a headache after he had gone on stage to sing at a function at a hotel on Tuesday night, the officials said. He was in intensive care.

3 killed, several wounded in southeast Turkey

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (R) — Kurdish guerrillas killed three people and wounded several others in separate clashes in southeastern Turkey Thursday, security officials said. In Bingol province about 50 members of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) attacked a police station and a Gendarmerie post, killing one policeman and wounding several others before escaping. In the southeastern province of Mus, rebels attacked a police station and a police residence, killing one civilian and injuring others. The rebels shot dead a village guard near Diyarbakir and wounded four more. The PKK has killed 14 soldiers since Oct. 7, provoking Turkish retaliatory raids into northern Iraq. More than 3,300 people have died in the PKK's violent independence campaign in southeast Turkey since 1984.

Mubarak discusses Mideast with Waldheim

VIENNA (AP) — President Hoeni Mubarak of Egypt and Austrian President Kurt Waldheim Thursday discussed the situation in the Middle East prior to the planned peace conference and the war in Yugoslavia, officials said. No details were revealed of the talks that were held only hours after Mr. Mubarak arrived here from Bonn for an official visit. At a dinner, Dr. Waldheim expressed Austria's support for the endeavours undertaken by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker towards convening an international conference on the Middle East. Dr. Waldheim called on Israel "to desist from erecting further settlements in occupied areas and thus remove a serious obstacle to peace." He said Austria sincerely hopes that Israel will ultimately accept the principle of "land for peace," which forms the basis for a settlement of the Middle East problem in accordance with relevant U.N. resolutions.

Bush defends Gulf war news curbs

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush said Thursday the American people were well-served by news coverage of the Gulf war. The coverage, which was heavily regulated by the U.S. Defence Department, was not perfect, the president acknowledged over a television hookup to the convention in Detroit of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association. But he added that "the American people felt that they got very strong, intrusive coverage of the war."

Kidnappers deny demanding guarantees

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese kidnappers holding two Americans and a Briton denied Friday demanding guarantees for their safety after their captives are freed. In a statement sent to an international news agency in Beirut with a photograph of American Terry Anderson, the fundamentalist Islamic Jihad (Holy War) said it would continue on its path of jihad. The statement made no mention of a hostage release. The photograph — apparently an old one — showed Mr. Anderson, the longest-held Western hostage, in profile with a neatly-trimmed moustache and hair.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 — Le Chevalier du Labyrinthe
18:30 — Les Cavaliers du Ciel
19:00 — News in French
19:15 — Documentary
19:20 — News in Hebrew
20:00 — News in Arabic
20:30 — Totally Hidden VI
21:00 — Encounter
21:30 — Life on the Land
22:00 — News in English
22:30 — Feature film: "Blind Vengeance"

PRAYER TIMES

06:10 — Fajr
05:30 — (Sunrise) Duha
11:21 — Dhahr
14:20 — 'Asr
17:40 — Maghreb
18:25 — 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 510740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Taranata Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 622541

Anglican Church Tel. 623363, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 713331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assyrian International Church Tel. 683236

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811255

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623624, 656552

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Unstable weather conditions will prevail Saturday in the country. Therefore, it will be partly cloudy and there will be a possibility of scattered showers of rain. Winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman 14/25

Aqaba 20/32

Dhahran 14/26

Jordan Valley 21/33

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue Police 199, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 893390

Public Security Department 603021

Hotel Complaints 603080

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 697467

Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 691010

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power 815615

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Essameh Medical Centre 81361322

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816

Abdali Maternity, J. Amn. 642412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Mahana, J.



ELECTION RESULTS—The Jordanian Women's Federation elected its president and executive committee Friday, after over a year of internal strife between Islamist and secular women. The ladies elected Huda Abu Ghazaleh as their president. The other 5 members of the executive committee which were elected all belonged to the Unity Block. The winners were Dr. Safa Qassab (above, right) Izzat Shalabi, Amal Shalabi, Janet Mubki, Khawar Khatib, Shadia Bakhran, Aida Sabi and Fatma Obaidat.

Officials welcome Saudi decision to open territory to Jordanian trucks

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the Ministry of Transport's Research and Studies Department Mansour Shammout Friday welcomed the Saudi Arabian authorities' decision to allow Jordanian trucks to enter Saudi territories, saying that it represents a new opportunity for the land transport sector in Jordan to thrive.

The ban on the entry of Jordanian trucks to Saudi Arabia took effect nearly 15 months ago, when the Gulf crisis was at its peak.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Shammout voiced appreciation to the Saudi government for its decision, saying that the Jordanian land transport sector can now go back to its traditional markets in Saudi Arabia and the other countries of the

Gulf. He noted that the Saudi and Gulf markets are the ideal markets for Jordan's land transport sector, given Jordan's central geographic location and its economic relations with the Gulf countries.

He added that Jordan owns the largest refrigerated land transport fleet in the Middle East and was not meant only to serve Jordan, but also to the neighbouring Arab countries.

Mr. Shammout said his ministry would do its utmost to remove any obstacles that might hinder the smooth operation of the land transport fleet.

Meanwhile, members of the Jordanian Truck Owners Association expressed deep appreciation to the Saudi government for its decision to allow Jordanian trucks to enter its

territories and said it would contribute positively to strengthening the land transport movement between Jordan and the neighbouring countries.

The association's president, Qasem Al Saoub, said the Saudi decision will strengthen the trade movement with the Gulf countries, as well as Yemen, Syria and Lebanon. He added that the Saudi decision also contributes towards strengthening the Arab economic and commercial march.

Mr. Saoub said that the number of Jordanian trucks operating between Jordan and the neighbouring Arab countries is 12,000. He added that the revenues collected from the land transport fleet account for 12 per cent of the national income.

Art exhibition by three artists use colour intensity to achieve effects

By Maha Adnani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Three artists whose works total 120 pieces and are currently on display at the Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation's gallery all have colour intensity in common in their art.

The sculptures, many with a theme of love by Muhammad Hussein Abdullah and paintings by Khaled Khreis and Abdul Ra'ouf Sham'oun all follow abstract art techniques.

The sculpture compositions by Mr. Abdullah are mostly made up of two figures, each constructed with male, female and animal shapes. He uses plaster, clay or bronze and often uses water colours and acrylic to give each of the 37 works that he has on display more character.

In a clay sculpture showing a skull of a bull's head, Mr. Abdullah uses colour only to enhance the sharp, symmetrical horns. The horns are painted golden.

In another plaster sculpture, a man is in a stance which indicates that he had just leapt back from a hazzard of some kind. The source of danger is invisible but its presence is intense by a horse standing on its hind legs facing the man. The sculpture is entirely white.

Yet another eye-catching work by the same artist is a seated figure resembling the right side of a female body painted royal blue. Next to this is an identical, right side of another female painted deep green. The components of this composition are streamlined in contour and appear very realistic.

The paintings by Mr. Khreis have bright colours, which are mostly earth tones, as he uses many yellows and browns. In contrast with that, he also uses pastel shades. In one of his paintings, Mr. Khreis shows the arches of what seems like a tunnel.



Exhibit by Muhammad Hussein Abdullah currently on display at Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation.

Surprisingly, though, the inside of the tunnel is pink and white when it is expected to be black or grey.

A feature unique to Mr. Khreis in this exhibition is his use of mixed media in a special way. It is noticeable in at least eight of his 33 pieces on display that the background is an actual newspaper with the abstract compositions painted to cover most of the paper. Although the papers may distract one from the actual composition, Mr. Khreis has managed with the strength of his subjects to create an effective balance between the background and foreground that stimulates the onlookers' imaginations.

Mr. Sham'oun's works are extremely vivid so that the main subject is no longer the actual

New intellectual society formed

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Board of the Executive Council of the Third World Economists Society Yacoub Suleiman announced Wednesday the establishment of Dar Al Hikma, a new intellectual forum grouping academics, scholars, scientists and intellectuals.

Dr. Suleiman said the society chose Jordan as the venue for announcing the establishment of the forum because of the atmosphere of democracy in the Kingdom and voiced his hope that this experiment will be followed in other countries of the world.

The new forum, he said, is open to all intellectuals, scientists and scholars who are willing to achieve its objectives, represented in serving the cause of nations and of humanity.

"This forum is not a political group or party or bloc; it is an intellectual workshop where important issues of concern to the oppressed peoples are discussed in accordance with scientific methodology and social commitment," he said.

Court says trial will go on despite withdrawal by defendants' attorneys

Prophet Mohammad's Army members arrange for alternate representation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The State Security Court Thursday announced it was going ahead with the trial of 18 members of a militant group self-styled as Prophet Mohammad's Army, undeterred by the defense attorney's allegations about the legality of the procedures.

Lawyer Hussein Mjalli, who represents 13 of the defendants held for allegedly committing terrorist activities and plotting to destabilise state security, demanded that all the detainees be released as the investigations and the court trial itself were illegal.

Mr. Mjalli, who is also a member of the Lower House of Parliament, said that the arrest of the 18 militant group members took place after the abrogation of the martial law regulations in the country.

Judge Youssef Faouri said that the public intelligence and security services had apprehended the accused before the martial court regulations had been cancelled and that the investigations and judicial procedures against the accused had already been underway. The judge said that the present trial was to be regarded

as a continuation of the legal procedures taken in the case.

At the outset of the session it was announced that the defendants had made arrangements to have attorneys replace the 15 lawyers who had withdrawn from the case during last Monday's session in protest against the alleged torture of the accused during their detention.

The 18 group members standing trial have been accused of committing bombings, arson and plotting to assassinate government officials and foreign diplomats.

The defendants had pleaded not guilty to the charges levelled against them, reversing their earlier statements taken under interrogations.

The 15 lawyers who pulled out from the case had alleged that the detainees had admitted to committing the alleged crimes while under torture during interrogations.

Another lawyer, Jawad Yunis, who has been defending a number of the accused, announced his withdrawal from the case after opposing the trial procedures. Mr. Yunis said that the accused were all held at a Military Re-

formatory Centre although none of the accused was military in character.

But the judge said that the allegations had no legal basis and unrealistic. Judge Faouri said the allegations were considered a violation of the court's law and a direct contest of the integrity of the Jordanian judiciary system.

He warned the lawyer to refrain from levelling such accusations at the court or face legal procedures.

Later, the judge announced that the court's next session will be held on Monday.

Association of Arab Universities to hold conference in Qatar

AMMAN (Petra) — The Association of Arab Universities (AAU) will hold its 24th session in Qatar on Oct. 26 according to the AAU's Secretary General Mohammad Faraj Al Dugheim.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Dugheim said all representatives of the 57 members universities will take part in that meeting in addition to representatives from Arab and international organisations. He added that a conference on the economics of higher education in the Arab states and a book exhibition will be held on the sidelines of the 26th session.

Dr. Dugheim pointed out that the association's agenda is crowded and that it is supposed to discuss 44 items relating to the association's administrative, financial and budgetary aspects as well as its final accounts and the condition of the Arab World Atlas Corporation, set up the association 10 years ago. The agenda also includes a review of the federation's activities during the last six years and its future plans.

Council considering establishing federation that will include all farmers unions in country

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Higher Agricultural Council on Sunday will discuss a draft law for the establishment of a Jordanian Farmers Federation that would replace the present Jordan Valley Farmers Association so as to cover all farmers unions in the country.

At the session, which will be chaired by Minister of Agriculture Sabhi Al Qasem, matters related to promoting agricultural production, problems facing farmers and a national agricultural policy will be reviewed.

A Ministry of Agriculture official said that the question of holding agricultural exhibitions and specialised conferences and the publication of specialised agricultural gazettes will also be discussed.

Ministry officials said that the draft law will also include the establishment of nine specialised unions for farmers producing vegetables, cereals, olives, citrus and other fruit, poultry farmers, cattle breeders and meat.

Dr. Qasem said in a statement this week that Jordan produced 80 per cent of its food products in 1990 utilising only 27 per cent of its arable land. Most of the pro-



duction came from lands irrigated by underground or dam water, according to the minister.

In his statement, marking World Food Day, the minister said that Jordan's private and public sectors have been exerting tremendous efforts over the past 10 years to increase food production and the area of land covered by trees.

Jordan now produces fruit in great quantities in the Shobak region in southern Jordan and cereals in southeastern semi-arid

regions by utilising underground water resources, he said. The minister said that together with the areas in the Jordan Valleys, which form the backbone of agriculture in the country, Jordan now has increased its lands covered with trees by 30 per cent in 10 years.

The minister called for a drastic change in Jordan's concept of agricultural strategy and said that the country can and must raise the efficiency of production over the coming five years through further investments in soil and water resources.

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) marked this year's World Food Day by a slogan noting that saving trees will help feed the hungry.

It noted that many farmers have been destroying trees. At least 42 million acres of land are lost each year, most of it to farmers clearing land to grow crops, the FAO statement said.

The FAO estimated that one in every five people in the world, most of them children suffer from hunger and that 15 to 20 million people die every year from its effects and diseases affiliated to malnutrition.

Jordan, Poland sign cooperation agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Poland have signed a joint cooperation programme that paves the way for bilateral cooperation in cultural and scientific fields.

The two sides will open the way for the exchange of visits by scientists, researchers and publications and will encourage cooperation among educational institutions and universities in the two countries. They will also offer each other scholarships for students specialising in a number of fields.

The programme provides for Jordan and Poland to promote exchange of folkloric troupe visits and of journalists and direct cooperation between radio and television in the two countries.

The two countries will encourage commencement of tourism and visits by people of either country and will hold contacts leading to cooperation in health matters through a joint agreement covering matters related to preventive medicine and medical sciences.

The programme was signed at the Ministry of Planning



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CORRECTION

In its Thursday's edition, the Jordan Times erroneously reported that China's ambassador to Jordan, Hahn Choon Lee, presented his credentials to His Majesty King Hussein. Mr. Hahn Choon Lee is ambassador of the Republic of Korea. The Jordan Times regrets the error.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Art exhibition by Abdel Raouf Sham'oun, Khaled Khreis and Muhammad Hussein Abdullah at Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery (Open 10 a.m. till 5 p.m.)
- ★ Comprehensive book exhibition at Yarmouk University.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artists Ismail Khayyat, Muhammad Abdullah, Khaled Mohamed, Ali Mansour, Khalid Wahd and Hameed Ali at Bahadur Art Gallery (located at the beginning of Gardens Street from Safeway).
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Mohammad Al Jalous at the French Cultural Centre.

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Destination Madrid ...and real peace

REASONABLENESS, common sense and patient diplomacy have prevailed: There is going to be an international peace conference on the Middle East and it is going to be held in Madrid on Oct. 30.

Even though the road is finally open for a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region, what remains to be done is stupendous in task and monumental in scope. The convening of the conference is but the first step in a thousand mile journey that we are just beginning to embark on.

This is indeed an historic moment in the life of this region and the world as a whole. To attempt to put it into proper perspective in any number of words, however, is an invitation to history to smile at us. History will need from those who attempt to write it to wait for reality to be borne before it can pass judgement on what this moment means to all of us.

Meanwhile, observations, no less baroque than history itself, can be made.

In listing them, theoretical patterns and logical grooves are better left out, since the occasion making history now warrants positive input and hopeful feedback. A precarious enterprise as the one we are attempting here requires reaching only those conclusions which are neither controversial nor transient in nature. On such basis we proceed.

□ The core of the Arab-Israeli conflict has always been the Palestinian problem. Until the Israelis and the Palestinians sat together to negotiate a solution to their problem, nothing was ever going to be solved. The peace conference will provide the right umbrella for those talks and will thus serve as a rare opportunity to bring about not only an historic reconciliation between the two peoples but also between Israelis and Arabs, Muslims and Jews.

□ The land-for-peace formula, which has long been touted as the key to Arab-Israeli peace, will be put to the ultimate test. The impending talks will be substantive and promising when they centre on finding a mechanism for implementing the formula, and mere self-delusions if they will not.

□ The conference will be more like a desert mirage without the active participation and involvement of the international community led by the United States. Washington is about the only power in the world that has the key to unlocking Israel's intransigence on the question of withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. In return for American pressure on Israel to pull its troops out, the Arab side should be willing and able to convince all, especially the U.S. and Israel, that real and genuine peace is the Arab World's ultimate goal.

□ While peace, stability and security in this region are in themselves a natural choice for the peoples of the Middle East, as indeed elsewhere, everybody should know that the triangle cannot be drawn by ink and on paper alone. There will have to be justice for all, economic support and development programmes for those who need them, in order to ensure that any peaceful settlement will be enduring and comprehensive. Extremism, violence and hatred mostly have their roots in injustice done unto peoples and in economic deprivation as is clearly the case in this part of the world. The peace conference will be largely academic unless the conflict's human dimensions and impact on the lives of the region's peoples are placed on top of the agenda at every stage.

Reasonableness, common sense and the desire for peace have won, and the beginning of a new era should start at Madrid in 11 days' time. It should be a one-way street towards peace from there.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

TO escape from the full implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, Israel is looking to link that resolution to the so-called secure borders issue, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. There is no doubt that in their talks with the U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, the Israelis have been stressing this point because, and according to a number of Israeli officials, the U.S. administration has concluded an understanding dealing with the Arabs to secure Israel's withdrawal to the pre-1967 border lines, the paper said. Israel does not wish to abandon the occupied Arab territories, claiming that they form secure boundaries, providing protection to the Jewish state though it realises that 1973 had shattered the myth of secure borders, the paper pointed out. It said that throughout its wars with the Arabs, and during the 25 years of occupation of Arab territory, Israel has not been able to ensure for itself security against attacks. In light of the previous experiences and the events over the past three decades, one can only say that the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which ensures the rights of all parties to the conflict can alone provide security for the Jewish state, the paper said. It said that the advanced weapons and the modern technology have destroyed the myth of secure borders for any country in the world. Should the Israelis accept the idea of implementing Resolution 242, said the paper, they would be choosing the right path towards security and lasting peace with their Arab neighbours.

DWELLING on the same theme Sawt Al Shaab daily said that Israeli leaders are appalled by the idea that the U.S. administration is serious about the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions in order to bring about peace to the Middle East. For this reason, the paper said, the ongoing wrangling within the Israeli government is unprecedented, ever since the Israeli troops occupied the Arab lands in the 1967 war. The paper said that the Shamir government feels disappointed and betrayed by the U.S. administration in light of the letters of assurances Washington has passed on to the Arabs to encourage them to advance to the peace conference. The Shamir government is also disturbed by the continued pressure it is receiving from the European Community countries to reach peace with the Arabs and recognise the Palestinian people's rights in their homeland, the paper added.

Bush-Shamir showdown makes American Jews face 'ignored realities'

By Arthur Hertzberg

FOR the first time, an administration in Washington has linked further American generosity toward Israel to Israel's willingness to stop further settlements on the West Bank. The government in Israel and officials of American Jewish organisations have reacted by denouncing President George Bush for using a humanitarian cause, the need to finance the settlement of hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews, as a weapon in his battle against Yitzhak Shamir's expansionist policies. But these denunciations fail to conceal the real issue, which is whether American-backed aid is to finance the absorption of the West Bank into Israel, thus making an eventual exchange of territory for peace impossible. Both the Israeli government and the leaders of American Jewish organisations know that, whether a peace conference soon takes place or not, the long-predicted fight over the future of the territories that Israel acquired in the war of June 1967 has finally begun.

For months signals from Washington have made it clear that the Bush administration has lost patience with the policies of the Shamir government. Israel's ambassador in Washington, Zalman Shoval, a political appointee who was formerly a Likud member of the Knesset, said bluntly in June, in an interview on Israeli radio, that the government would have to choose between more West Bank settlements and American aid. Several cabinet ministers bitterly denounced him, although he was simply reporting on the Bush administration's policies, and his warning was only one of several signs in recent months of growing disaffection in Washington. Why did the administration harden its position, and why did the Israelis and the American Jewish organisations disregard the signals and head into confrontation?

The administration, for its part, came to the conclusion that the present government, the most right wing in Israel's history, intends to hold on to the West Bank and Gaza, and the Golan Heights, at any cost. During the last fifteen years some U.S. officials were drawn to theories that "only the Likud can make peace," that only the right wing could lead Israel to territorial compromise. These have turned out to be false, as did the notion that supposedly moderate right-wingers — Yitzhak Shamir is sometimes cast in this role — would strike a deal if they did not have to depend for a majority in the Knesset on the extremists — such as Genia Cohen and Rechavam Zeevi — who oppose the slightest concession to the Palestinians. The Labour Party has said it would support Mr. Shamir against any vote of no confidence if he were to move toward a

policy of "territories for peace." Mr. Shamir has ignored this offer. In 1979, when he was speaker of the Knesset, he voted against the Camp David agreement because he thought its provisions for autonomy for Palestinians on the West Bank would lead inexorably to the creation of a Palestinian state. He has made clear his belief that Jewish failure to settle the West Bank will lead to the same result.

Mr. Shamir was warned recently in private by several leaders of American Jewish organisations and by some friendly congressmen that defying Mr. Bush's appeal for a delay in considering loan guarantees would risk a confrontation with the U.S. Instead he persisted in encouraging his supporters in the U.S. to make an issue of the guarantees now, and pressed his allies in Congress to introduce legislation to stop any delay. Yosef Harif, the journalist whom Mr. Shamir uses to leak some of his views, wrote in Ma'ariv on Sept. 13 that Mr. Shamir would not be upset if the confrontation stopped the peace conference from taking place at all. The leak had at least two implications: Mr. Shamir was trying to warn the Americans that the loan guarantees were part of his price for attending the conference, and he had not modified his intransigence over the territories, the idea of "territories for peace," which Mr. Shamir has always rejected, was for many years the policy backed by the Israeli government and by most moderate Jewish leaders in the U.S. In demanding that the American Jewish establishment not only accept Mr. Shamir's position but directly challenge the U.S. government over it, the right-wing Israeli leaders are depending on longstanding feelings of inferiority and deference on the part of diaspora Jews towards the Holy Land that are little acknowledged but are very deep nonetheless.

The sense that diaspora Jews are in some sense lesser Jews than those living in Zion is explicit in prayer books and in the whole structure of traditional Jewish law. Those who dwell in Zion are, by definition, the more holy. The secular Israelis of today have translated this notion into the view that the diaspora owes deference to the Israelis because they and their children have fought the wars of Israel, while those in the diaspora have merely provided money and political support. Very soon after the state of Israel was created, its first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, insisted that true Zionists were those who lived in Israel or were planning to do so, and that all other Jews were a lesser breed. "Friends of Israel who could earn Jerusalem's approval by the intensity of their support. Throughout the centuries, those who provided the money for the

Jews in the Holy Land were seldom given an accounting of how it was spent there. Such inquisitiveness was held to be an impertinence, for the authorities in the Holy Land knew best.

This attitude, in its contemporary, secular, version, dominates the financial and even the political relationship between Israelis and Jews living elsewhere. The centuries-old archetypes that govern the relationship between Israel and the diaspora are even echoed in the rhetoric with which Israel defines its connection to the United States. Israel expects a "special relationship" because it is the sole and reliable representative of American-style democracy in the Middle East. If democracy is the secular religion of the West, then Israel is the unique representative of the faith in a highly sensitive region, and it is entitled to special deference. Any attempt to treat Israel as one of many other American concerns is bitterly resented. Among American Jewish leaders it has become a kind of folk wisdom that the diaspora should accommodate to the prevailing government in Israel, and try to persuade the U.S. to follow suit. The Jewish establishment in America wants to remain in good standing with the rulers in Jerusalem, who, in the last fifteen years, have been the men and women of Israel's right wing. If the Labour Party were in power today, most American Jewish leaders would be backing an exchange of territories for a peaceful settlement.

A tragic consequence of this relationship is that most Jews in the diaspora remain ignorant of the different currents of thought in Israel itself. Throughout the present crisis the American Jewish press has hardly mentioned the division of opinion within Israel; it is too busy mounting defences of Prime Minister Shamir and deploring President Bush's hard-heartedness toward Soviet Jews. But on Sept. 13, for example, Yediot Achronoth, the mass-circulation daily that is read by most Israelis, reported on its front page that 69 per cent of the respondents to a recent poll, including half of those who voted for the Likud, were willing to trade territories for peace. Israeli opinion has often shifted on this question; but here was current evidence that the Shamir government's policy on the territories represents only a minority of the country and, at most, half of its own party. These startling facts have not affected perceptions in the American Jewish community because the American Jewish press and organisations have not publicised them, and may not even be aware of them.

A large proportion of Israel's high military and intelligence officials, moreover, and most of its intellectuals have been strongly opposed for years to Mr. Shamir's annexationist policies; but

their views, too, have been effectively obscured outside Israel, especially in the United States. Two years ago Mr. Shamir called a conference in Jerusalem on "solidarity with Israel," which was in reality a stage-managed affair intended to show that Jewish leaders throughout the world were loyal to the government's policies. During the conference, the Israeli press carried a report that the prime minister had received an assessment by Israel's combined intelligence services that holding on to the entire West Bank would, in fact, threaten Israel's security, and that Israel would be better off retaining only several vantage points that would enable its forces to deter or destroy any possible attack.

A few hours after this news broke in the Hebrew press, I happened to meet the British press baron Robert Maxwell in a television studio where we and others were to debate the meaning of "solidarity" with Israel. He insisted that there was no such report since, at the closing session of the solidarity meeting, the prime minister had denied its existence. I said that if he repeated this view on the air, I would simply read from the newspapers in front of me, which quoted from the text of the intelligence assessment, or if they did, thinking experts, on ideological grounds, were none of their business. They felt it was their task to put the best face on whatever the government was doing.

Recently Ha'aretz, Israel's most distinguished newspaper, has vehemently opposed Mr. Shamir's policy of confrontation with the United States. Its senior columnist and chairman of the editorial board, Dr. Walter Gross, who uses the pen name Poles, wrote in early September that, despite the peace treaty with Egypt, the basic error of all Israeli governments since 1967 has been to hold on to the West Bank and Gaza. He wrote:

We must recognise that the world agreed to the creation of a Jewish state only on the condition of a partition of the land; he who holds fast to the slogan "not one foot shall be given back" is both strengthening our enemies and alienating friends.

Another editorial in Ha'aretz challenged the claim of Mr. Shamir and his coalition partners that the Americans had no right to stop Israel from using American money for measures which they believe are "contrary to the interests of the United States in the region." In Ha'aretz's view, Mr. Shamir would not have the support of a majority of Israelis if he persisted in his confrontation with the U.S. Ha'aretz warned that even if Mr. Shamir succeeds

in obtaining the loan guarantees he wants without making any change in his policies on the West Bank and Gaza, those who support him should "remember that a Shamir victory means the founding of a bi-national state in place of a Jewish state, Israel." That is, holding onto the territories means that Israel would have an Arab population of 40 per cent, and nearly two million Arabs could not be held in permanent subjugation and denied political rights without destroying Israel's claims to be a democratic state.

The real extent and impact of Israel's settlement policies have also been hidden from diaspora opinion. Some of the most knowledgeable American officials who monitor the West Bank have, indeed, professed exasperated admiration for the skill with which the Israelis have concealed the reality of the settlements, both from their own people and from the Americans. The central fact is that, using various administrative formulas to do so, the state of Israel has now asserted control over more than half of the land of the West Bank. Less than half of this land is being used directly for settlements. A substantial part is used by the military, but much of the rest has simply been set aside for future use, above all for new settlements. This means that the Arab population of the West Bank — estimated by the Israeli army to be approximately 1.3 million people — is now contained within less land than the Israeli government has allocated to itself for both its own purposes and for the 100,000 current Jewish settlers, with hundreds of thousands more to come if the plans of General Sharon, the minister of housing, are carried out. As for the proportionate distribution of the water supply, reliable statistics are hard to find, but virtually every Israeli newspaper has published feature articles describing how Arab farmers are dying for lack of water, while Jewish settlements adjoining their land have full swimming pools.

The financial costs of the settlement policy in the West Bank and Gaza are also concealed. In August, State Department Middle East experts wrote a "confidential" paper, which soon leaked, summarising the main facts about the West Bank and Gaza for members of Congress. The department's experts found that no more than \$8 million in Israel's annual budget were overtly assigned to building more housing on the West Bank. But, as the report suggested, the real annual cost of West Bank settlement is many times the published figure. The road-building programme in the West Bank is a case in point. Israel has the largest amount of traffic per kilometre of roads of any country in the world, as well as the highest accident rate per capita of population. Still, less

criticised by Mr. Bush and Mr. Baker for refusing even to consider territorial compromise.

There is a pathetic aspect to these contradictory attitudes, and to the way the Shamir government has been using them for its own purposes. The most devastating criticism I have seen of Mr. Shamir's manipulation of American Jews was written by Haim Hefer, whose column in Yediot Achronoth is the most widely read in Israel. In an article entitled "Hostages", on Sept. 20, he accused the Shamir government of using tactics of political blackmail to take the American Jewish community hostage. The American Jews responded, Hefer continued, even though what was requested of them "contradicted both reason and morality." But Hefer insisted that American Jews had to get into a conflict with President Bush, "to support the untruths that the Israeli government is throwing in its face."

Mr. Shamir, Hefer continues, is even reminding American Jews that they did not do enough during the Nazi years, and therefore they have no right to ask any questions now. Hefer then recalled that Lohi, the ultra-right wing group, of which Mr. Shamir was deputy commander in the 1940s, had itself tried to make a pact with the Nazis against the British. In Hefer's view, is sending the Jews of America, "our faithful brothers," into a battle "in which most of them do not believe," to "build a few more Jewish settlements on the West Bank. Hefer concluded his indictment by calling on Jews in America not to listen to the Shamir government, which is "abusing their love" for Israel.

Hefer's column was translated into English on the very day of its appearance by the American embassy in Tel Aviv, which produces texts or summaries for its own staff, and for Washington, of everything of any consequence in all of Israel's dailies. Paradoxically, therefore, American government leaders are better informed about what Israelis are thinking than American Jewish leaders, who devote their energies to the cause of Israel, and who come to Washington to lobby for it. It seems highly doubtful that they really know what the right-wing government has been doing in the occupied territories and what many Israelis think of it. The Jewish leaders might have spared themselves some of their current anguish over the conflict with the American government if they had insisted on learning facts that are now becoming harder and harder to avoid. The confrontation between Mr. Bush and Mr. Shamir is forcing American Jews to face ignored realities and to make up their minds, at last, on Israel's annexationist policy in the occupied territories. — The New York Review.

The Week in Print

Success of peace process depends on U.S.

THE peace process dominated the themes of the editorials and the columns written in the past week. The position of Arab countries, the ongoing events in the Arab World and Iraq as well as domestic issues were all discussed in the press.

Under the banner: "The Greatest Responsibility of the World's Only Superpower," a columnist in Al Ra'i daily said that people in the Middle East are hopeful that the current U.S. efforts to establish peace based on justice and the implementation of U.N. resolutions will be crowned with success.

Mahmoud Al Rimawi said that American Secretary of State James Baker is expected to overcome all the difficulties standing in the way of convening the peace conference which the Arabs hope would restore Arab rights and justice.

Al Ra'i daily said that if the United States' plan fails, a severe blow will have been dealt to its credibility and the future of the region would be gloomy. The paper said that the United States must pursue efforts for peace despite the Israeli government's objections.

Al Dostour, for its part, said that the coming days will witness a turning point in the future of this region. The paper said that the announcement that the U.S. and Soviet presidents could attend the opening ceremony of the projected peace conference can only lend further support to the parties' efforts to reach peace.

A columnist in Al Dostour said that the Israeli government was defying the idea of peace with the Arabs and the Palestinians by launching a fresh settlement programme in the occupied territories. Mohammad Kawash said that by allowing settlers to occupy Arab homes and land, the Israeli government was expressing its determination to oppose the peace process. By placing conditions on Palestinian participation in the peace conference, the writer said, it is resorting to last attempts to obstruct peace.

Salameh Ekour, who writes for Sawt Al Shaab, warned the United States that it would be the biggest loser should its attempts fail in bringing about justice to the Palestinians. The writer said that the United States' interests in the region would be in jeopardy if the plight of the Palestinian people is not justly addressed.

Several columnists commented on the nationwide support for His Majesty King Hussein's announcement that Jordan was going ahead with plans to participate in the Middle East peace conference.

Sawt Al Shaab daily described the King's address to the nation announcing Jordan's decision as positive and reflecting the Kingdom's endeavours to end the suffering of the Palestinian people.

The support for the King, the paper said, reflects the people's desire to live in peace and to see the Palestinians' rights restored.

A guest columnist in Sawt Al Shaab reviewed the King's en-

deavours to serve his country and said that Jordan's participation in the coming conference would be another attempt on the King's part to serve the Palestinians and their just and sacred cause.

Hani Kheir said that the Jordanian people have realised that their King was exerting all efforts for Palestine and was working in the spirit of the Great Arab Revolt.

George Haddad, who writes for Al Dostour daily, said that it was strange to see Arab parties wishing to meet with the Israelis and end the Middle East problems at a time when they find it difficult to come together and discuss a unified stand before the conference. The writer noted in particular a statement by Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak who said that he did not support the idea of convening a meeting by various concerned parties to unify the Arab stand.

Al Dostour daily described the Jordanian-Palestinian meetings in Amman to pave the ground for a unified stand at the coming conference as very constructive. The paper said that the formation of a joint delegation and agreement on the points to be discussed by the conference can only give impetus to the current efforts to restore peace in the region and the Palestinian people's right to their homeland.

The Jordanian-Palestinian coordinated efforts are perhaps the most significant developments going on at the present moment, said Sawt Al Shaab

daily. The paper said that the two sides are reaffirming to the world the fact that the Palestinians and the Jordanians constitute one integrated entity and are setting an example of good and brotherly ties among Arab countries.

Fahd Al Faneh said in Al Ra'i that it was a shameful thing for the Arabs to see Israeli warplanes violating Iraq's air space without lifting a finger in protest. The writer said that it was more shameful for the Arabs to learn that the warplanes had flown over three Arab countries on their way to Iraq.

This view was backed by Salameh Ekour in Sawt Al Shaab who said that the divisions among Arab countries are so deep that no Arab country is willing to support the other, even in the face of the provocations and acts of aggression on the part of a common enemy.

The writer said that the Israelis have the right to abort all endeavours for a just peace as long as the Arabs are not helping themselves and turning their attention towards issues of concern to the Arab Nation itself. The violation by Israel's planes of Iraq's air space was a stigma for all Arabs and for international law, he added.

Commenting on the people's solidarity conference held in Iraq to demand an end to the current blockade on the Iraqi people, a writer in Sawt Al Shaab said that while Jordan supports the statements issued by the conference

and backs its condemnations of continued aggression against Iraq, the Iraqi people are awaiting real actions and not mere words.

Ahmad Dhiban said Iraq's sovereignty is being violated, its people are being starved and its economic infrastructure is in ruins. He said that the representatives of the Arab political forces should turn their attention to practical steps rather than pay lip service, which can be of no use to the Iraqis.

Turning to the domestic issues, economist Fahd Al Faneh said that agreement between the government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) involved ending government subsidies on all commodities in the country. Writing in Al Ra'i daily, Faneh said there are many negative elements to this agreement, most of which affect the needy people of Jordan, at a time when most bread earners receive very low salaries. The writer said that if the government embarked on such measures, it should provide security nets to the low-income groups and the needy.

Another columnist dwelt with the same issue and said that he had seen pictures of abject poverty in Jordanian villages. He said that the problem of unemployment and hunger affects all regions and the village children hardly receive enough food to survive. He urged the government to step up efforts to deal with the problem of hunger and

poverty.

Another economist warned the various trade unions against waging strikes at a time when Jordan is facing serious challenges on the external and domestic fronts. Mohammad Saleh Jaber said that although the idea of strikes is acceptable in most advanced nations which believe in democracy, and although strikes are not banned in Jordan, one has first to examine the country's economic situation and understand that the state is in no position to offer salary increases under the present circumstances for obvious reasons, known to all people.

A writer in Sawt Al Shaab drew the readers' attention to the plight of the farmers of the Jordan Valley region and said they are faced with the problem of having to buy agricultural requirements at soaring prices. He also drew attention to the farmers' problems of marketing, having limited water for irrigation, and poor living conditions.

Dr. Fawzi Tuelmech, who is also a member of the Lower House of Parliament, said that the Jordan Valley is the backbone of the country's economy since it produces most of the crops that earn the Kingdom its foreign currency. He urged the government to offer assistance to the farmers so that they could continue to shoulder their responsibilities.

الشرق الأوسط

Peace conference to begin Oct. 30

(Continued from page 1)

an era marked by cooperation not by conflict and the hope of an era marked by hope itself and not despair," Mr. Baker said.

Face-to-face talks between Israel and the Arabs would begin four days after the conference opened, Mr. Baker said.

The invitations crown eight months of shuttle diplomacy by Mr. Baker, who was determined to exploit the shake-up in the Middle East caused by the Gulf war, and the decline of Soviet influence among the Arab states.

Mr. Baker said the conference would be followed by "direct negotiations designed to achieve real peace."

He said that on multilateral negotiations, which are to consider issues such as arms control and water use, "the parties wishing to participate in those negotiations should meet within two weeks after the opening of the conference" to begin organizing for talks.

Syria has expressed reservations about the multilateral talks, saying it hesitates to participate in them until it is sure the peace negotiations will succeed.

Mr. Baker noted that earlier Friday, Mr. Pankin announced that the Soviet Union was restoring diplomatic ties with Israel after a 24-year break because of the 1967 war.

"I think our joint presence were today represents something more," Mr. Baker said, then announced that invitations would be issued to the conference.

Mr. Pankin, in turn, said "I fully share" in the call for the peace conference.

"The stage we have come to represents a very important turning point for the Middle East,"

Mr. Pankin said in Russian, translated to English. "History is handing out an opportunity that we must not pass up."

Mr. Pankin said the restoration of ties with Israel signals a new, more balanced Soviet policy in the Middle East.

"In the past, the Soviet Union tended to sort of side with the Palestinians and the Arab states, while the United States sided with Israel, and this did not bring any tangible fruit," Mr. Pankin said.

"The new approach now is certainly not to have any proteges and support their positions no matter what they say and no matter how legitimate they may be," he said.

Mr. Pankin arrived in Israel on Thursday.

He met Thursday night with three Palestinian activists in a hotel in Arab East Jerusalem. The Palestinians told reporters after the two-hour meeting they had discussed the composition of a Palestinian delegation for the peace talks. Mr. Pankin said they talked about preparations for the conference.

On Friday, Mr. Pankin met with an expanded Palestinian delegation, including hardliners who oppose the peace process, and also held two rounds of talks with Mr. Baker, one of them unscripted.

Mr. Pankin left Israel soon after announcing the conference. He said he will be visiting Syria, Jordan and Egypt "to continue discussions with the leaders of all those countries regarding all the details, both the preparatory work and the conference itself."

Shamir indicates cabinet approval

(Continued from page 1)

refusal to attend regional talks on issues like disarmament and water conservation.

"The Syrian position is absolutely negative and doesn't promise success," he said.

"But nevertheless we decided to go to these negotiations and if the negotiations with Syria don't succeed it will be clear to all who is to blame for the failure."

At a separate news conference, Foreign Minister David Levy implied that the Palestinian list would present no problem, but said another issue remained to be

settled: A demand that the Middle East be the venue of the direct talks that are supposed to follow the ceremonial opening of the conference in Europe.

"The bilateral talks should take place in the area - once here, once there - in each Arab state concerned," he said. "This matter is being dealt with and I believe it will be arranged."

Mr. Shamir, under pressure to abandon the peace process, met leaders of the three far-right parties in his coalition shortly before his meeting with Mr. Baker. No details were available on the content of the talks.

Sharon: U.S. wants to force Israel

(Continued from page 1)

no question of land for peace and insisted that Palestinians already had a state.

"Jordan is Palestine," he said. "We will never agree to the establishment of a second Arab Palestinian state in addition to the one which already exists within Palestine east of the River Jordan."

Mr. Sharon spoke of the possibility of Iran and Arab governments developing nuclear weapons.

"Today we know as little about this subject just as little as governments and surveillance, and supervision authorities in the world knew until a few weeks ago about the Iraqi nuclear programme," he said.

"It would therefore be logical

to concentrate all exposure and control efforts towards preventing Syria, Libya, Iran and even Algeria becoming uncontrollable chemical or nuclear monstrosities. But I am afraid that the American government, in conformance with its present policy, will rather concentrate on exposing Israel."

"Should it do this, it will cause the collapse of a central element in Israel's deterrence capacity, and bring closer the day when the United States together with the entire world will be faced with a Iraq-like country in possession of nuclear weapons," Mr. Sharon said.

The L'Chaim Society originally had invited former President Ronald Reagan to give the inaugural address, but Mr. Reagan cancelled the appearance.

Mystery surrounds final shape

(Continued from page 1)

before he met Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir Friday but Mr. Baker did not show it to the Israelis.

"Mr. Baker said he got a list of Palestinians who answer in general the requirements we presented," Mr. Shamir said. "I generally believe him but as representatives of a state we cannot leave it at that and we will find ways of checking it," Mr. Shamir added.

Palestinians insisted on choosing their own delegates and demanded Mr. Baker not give the names to Israel. Mr. Baker in return urged the Palestinians not to choose people they knew Israel would reject. Mr. Arafat has thrown his weight behind the peace conference and Syrian officials later said he would be going to Damascus within 48 hours to take part in a summit with the leaders of all the Arab participants.

Bassam Abu Sharif, the political adviser to Mr. Arafat, said the names included seven participants and seven alternates.

He said Mr. Hussein will announce the names of the Palestinian delegates in Jerusalem. He did not say when the announcement will be made.

Mr. Abu Sharif said the participants are:

— Fajr Abu Madain, a lawyer from the Gaza Strip and head of the Gaza Bar Association;
— Zakaria Al Agha, a physician from the Gaza Strip and head of the Gaza Medical Association;
— Radwan Abu Aysa, of the Arafat refugee camp in Nablies, former head of the Arab Journalists Association;
— Ghassan Al Khatib, a professor from Ramallah;
— Mamdouh Al Iker, a physician from Hebron;

— Sami Kilani, a professor from the village of Yab Bad; and
— Zuhair Kanai of Ramallah.

Mr. Abu Sharif did not give the names of the seven alternates — Dr. Iker, Mr. Kilani, Dr. Agha and Ms. Kanai as well as another five Palestinian activists met with Mr. Baker in Jerusalem Friday.

Mr. Abu Sharif said Mr. Hussein and Dr. Hassan Ashrawi, who have been negotiating peace conference terms with Mr. Baker, would be consultants to the Palestinian delegation but not have any part of it.

Mr. Arafat rallied the PCC behind the idea of a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation after extensive talks Thursday.

"The PLO has decided to take part in the peace conference proposed by President George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev" in a joint delegation with Jordan, he told Reuters after the vote on Friday.

PLO spokesman Ahmad Abdul Rahman said the PLO would be directing the delegation from behind-the-scenes.

"The PLO has taken the decision to participate, and the PLO remains the delegation's point of reference, for its composition and the names of its members," he told Reuters.

Story council members voted for participation, 15 voted against and three abstained.

The final decision reflected positions set out by the PNC.

The council made a major concession by agreeing to attend the conference without insisting that the creation of new Jewish settlements on the West Bank, Gaza Strip and in East Jerusalem be halted when the conference starts.

The United States has given assurances it will continue to pressure Israel to freeze the settlements during the conference and spokesman "Rahman said on this issue the PLO was taking a 'calculated risk'."

"This question is still explosive. It is inconceivable that we say at the conference table to talk of international legality if the creation of settlements continues," he said.

Soviets restore ties with Israel

(Continued from page 1)

the rules of international law, and on the basis of according mutual respect for sovereignty and noninterference in each other's domestic affairs.

"The two sides firmly believe that the reestablishment of full diplomatic relations between the USSR and the state of Israel fully serves the interests of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, the establishment of a lasting peace and stability in this region and a further development of international cooperation."

Mr. Pankin arrived in Israel Thursday, a day after Mr. Baker, marking the first time a U.S. secretary of state and a Soviet foreign minister were in Israel together.

Mr. Pankin met Mr. Baker for two hours before going to the

Jordan welcomes conference

(Continued from page 1)

The negotiations to be kicked off by the conference will aim to establish interim self-government for Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories within one year.

A senior U.S. official, briefing reporters on condition that he remain anonymous, said this target was contained in the formal invitations to the peace conference being delivered to the parties.

"In the invitation you will see a statement that says the negotiations on interim self-government arrangements will be conducted with the objective of completing them in one year," the official said.

He said the request to include this in the invitation came from Palestinians and was reluctantly agreed to by Israel.

"Israel is not enthusiastic about it but we ended up getting it included in the invitation without objections," the official said.

The invitation further stated that negotiations on the permanent status of the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip would begin in the third year of the interim period which is envisioned lasting five years.

The official said the peace conference in Madrid would probably last three days and would be at foreign minister level. President George Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev would make opening statements and then leave the city. The United States would like the

conference to be held in open session.

Each delegation, including the both Palestinians and Jordanians who form a joint delegation, would make an opening statement. Delegations would sit under simple identifying name plates rather than flags.

The conference is supposed to be followed by bilateral negotiations at senior official level within four days. The venues and structure of these talks has yet to be worked out and the official said there could be difficult negotiations to settle them.

It was not even clear if the United States would participate in these negotiations, the official said. It was willing to do so if requested to by the parties.

The official said there were still several potential pitfalls that could prevent the peace conference from taking place. He listed:

— It was not totally clear which way the Israeli cabinet would vote, although it was likely to decide to attend.

— The Palestinian delegation was not yet complete. Mr. Baker received a list of delegates earlier Friday whom he said met conditions set by Israel but there were still some empty places on the team.

— The Palestinians could upset Israel by making statements about their links with the PLO.

The official said the invitation to the conference stated that the aim of the negotiations was to achieve "real peace, genuine peace and reconciliation."

It did not say the aim was to sign peace treaties between Israel and its neighbors as Israel had demanded. The Israelis say that Arab states may want to stop short of establishing full peace and would rather settle for non-belligerency agreements.

This was one point Israel wanted to be included in the letter of assurances it will receive from the United States.

The official said Mr. Baker agreed to 33 changes requested by Israel in the text of the letter but turned down a further seven changes.

American Jews face 'ignored realities'

(Continued from page 4)

money is being spent on road building to remove such congestion than is allocated for road construction on the West Bank. A master plan is being carried out under which it will be possible to drive to and among the settlements without ever passing through an Arab village. In part, this programme is an answer to the intifada: it is far harder to throw rocks at a passing Jewish car from the side of an open road than from a village alley. But the network of roads also means that, in the long run, Jews will be able to live on the West Bank in a separate world of their own.

This summer, Mr. Sharon's Ministry of Housing announced that during the next two years it plans to double the Jewish population on the West Bank to about two hundred thousand people.

Together with the growing number of settlements in Gaza and especially in the Golan Heights, this means that a quarter of a million Jews will be living in the occupied territories. Mr. Sharon and the other officials who are backing the plan have not hidden their purpose: these increases in population are intended to make the "administered territories" non-negotiable. According to the Israeli papers, the overall costs of the planned settlements would amount to at least one billion dollars.

The most authoritative criticism of the costs of the settlement

policy has come most recently from an unexpected source, Yitzhak Modai, the minister of finance in Mr. Shamir's cabinet, and the leading Liberal Party member of the Likud government coalition. In an interview with Yedioth Ahronoth, Mr. Modai charged that Mr. Sharon's Ministry of Housing does not give us reliable information on the extent of its building activities in the territories. The increased pace of building in the region is beyond proportion. The disregard of the budget by the Ministry of Housing has eaten up whatever has been left over in the budget by the slowing of the pace of Russian immigration.

Mr. Modai made it clear that as finance minister he could no longer control the rate of settlement.

Jewish opinion in the United States has not, to my knowledge, been recently measured in a major poll, but I have heard of surveys by Jewish organisations in which a minority of about 20 per cent in favour of the undivided land of Israel, even at the cost of a bitter fight with the administration in Washington. Virtually all American Jews want to help the Soviet Jews, and most are uneasy at the thought of being in the middle of a dispute between Washington and Jerusalem. A strong majority is for territorial compromise; but an equally strong majority is unhappy to see Israel's government

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Jordan Times

Olympic organisers defend venue selection process

SYDNEY (R) — Olympic organisers made it clear Friday they would resist growing pressure from international sports bodies wanting a greater say in the running of the games.

"The present system is not perfect but it does have a number of advantages," Francois Carrard, the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) director-general, told the annual congress of leading sports administrators here.

The IOC, whose 94 delegates choose the venues for the winter and summer Olympics, have come under criticism for the way they select the host city and in particular the lobbying process and the high cost.

The IOC, at its July session in Birmingham, England, agreed to set up a working group to look into ways of improving the selection method.

But Carrard said that if the IOC involved the international sports federations and National Olympic Committees it would create more problems.

"We are aware that the present system and structures are certainly far from being perfect... but it's the least of all evils," said Switzerland's Carrard.

If the federations and national committees also voted "you would have to lobby hundreds, maybe thousands of people around the world," he said.

International rowing chief John Boulthoe criticised the IOC for not asking international federations to advise on the facilities in bidding cities.

"There should be a formal procedure whereby each candidate city must have a certificate from each international federation that their facilities are suitable," Mr. Boulthoe, the Australian secretary-general of the International Federation of Rowing Association (IFRA), told the 350 delegates.

The IOC, reacting to these concerns and the lavish spending by bidding cities, has drawn up rules for the venues competing for the right to host the 2000 games — Sydney, Manchester, Berlin, Peking, Brasilia, Milan and Istanbul.

Receptions and cocktail parties for IOC delegates have been banned, spending on gifts has been limited to \$200, exhibitions and demonstrations on the day before voting have been dropped and bid-book documents must be on regular A4 paper.

Cities can be disqualified for serious or repeated breaches of these regulations.

The decision on the venue for the 2000 games will be made by an IOC secret ballot in October 1993.

Meanwhile, an Australian aboriginal group lobbied the leading international sports officials Friday in a bid to have Sydney barred from hosting the Olympic Games in the year 2000.

A five-member delegation from the Aboriginal Legal Service (ALS) handed a letter critical of the treatment of aborigines in Australia to Un Yong Kim, president of the General Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF) which is holding its annual congress.

Mr. Kim told the Sydney-based group he would circulate the letter among the 75 sporting bodies belonging to the association.

The letter called on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to exclude Australia from bidding for the games because of its "appalling" treatment of aborigines.

"The racial overtones that have discredited South Africa are repeated in a hundredfold here in Australia," the letter said.

Delegation head and aboriginal lawyer Paul Coe said the IOC had a duty to judge a country's suitability for the Olympics not just on its ability to host sporting events.

"In our view Australia is not a suitable host country because it consistently violates the rights of aboriginal people," Mr. Coe said.

Mr. Coe quoted a World Council of Churches report earlier this year which said the poor living conditions of some aborigines equated to "genocide," and said several Australian inquiries this year had concluded that racism against aborigines was institutionalised.

Sydney is one of six cities to

announce a bid to host the games.

John Coates, president of Australia's Olympic Committee, who also met the delegation, said he did not accept that there was a parallel with South Africa.

"It's nonsense to compare Australia with South Africa," Mr. Coates said.

Earlier the IOC appealed to world sports bodies to help South Africa's return to the international arena following its readmission to the Olympic Movement in July.

"We know that South Africa still has many, many problems... we hope that you will all help," Carrard told the GAISF General Assembly meeting.

Carrard's plea, on behalf of IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, reflected the difficulties which have confronted the republic in competing internationally since the IOC decision.

"There are still difficulties with reunification (of sporting bodies) on a non-racial basis. It's an extremely difficult task," Mr. Carrard told leaders of Olympic and non-Olympic sports bodies.

South Africa's Olympics chief, Sam Ramsamy, said here Wednesday that sports bodies which had not unified might be barred from competing in Barcelona.

The republic's Olympics committee is to decide on Nov. 3 whether it will participate in Spain despite its readmission by the IOC after more than 20 years in the wilderness.

Mr. Carrard said the simple fact of readmitting South Africa would not solve its problems. "Nothing can be changed overnight," he said.

Mr. Ramsamy, here as the delegate for the National Olympic Committee of South Africa (NOCASA), said a number of sports bodies were not integrated and re-entry to international sport would be selective.

The heads of two rival South African athletics groupings said Wednesday they were confident of unifying their organisations and establishing a non-racial code in time to send a team to Barcelona.

She's hoping for better luck in Spain than she's had in past Olympics.

A shin splint kept her out of Montreal in 1976. A U.S.-led boycott ended her hopes of competing at Moscow in 1980. And no one will allow her to forget the collision with South Africa's Zola Budd in 1984 at Los Angeles.

"There's a chance I'd go to South Africa to compete against her, but right now our government won't allow it," Decker-Slaney said.

She said she was surprised with the weakness of the women's field in Friday's race. She was never seriously threatened and finished with an 80-metre lead.

Decker-Slaney, aiming for a 3,000-metre spot on the U.S. team for next year's Barcelona Olympics, said she was pleased to finish without injury.

"Nothing hurts, and that wasn't always the case," said the 33-year-old from Eugene, Oregon, who has spent much of the past two years recovering from

challengers at the 300-metre mark, leaving Australia's Simon Doyle and Darren Abbott to finish second and third.

Decker-Slaney's winning time of 4:24.4, off her personal best of 4:16.71, was still enough to give her a nine-second margin over the second-place woman, Angela Raines-White, a 17-year-old Australian. Another Australian, Jodie Nykist, was third.

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Berger takes provisional pole in Suzuka

SUZUKA, Japan (R) — Austrian Gerhard Berger upstaged championship rivals Ayrton Senna and Nigel Mansell Friday to claim provisional pole position for Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix.

Berger, in a McLaren, clocked the fastest time of one minute and 36.458 seconds on the 5.859-kilometre Suzuka circuit to narrowly outpace his team-mate Senna.

Senna recorded a time of 1:36.490 to share the front row of the overnight grid. Mansell was third fastest in 1:36.529 in his Williams.

Frenchman Alain Prost was fourth fastest in a Ferrari with a time of 1:37.565, ahead of his team-mate and fellow Frenchman Jean Alesi. Italian Riccardo Patrese was sixth fastest in the second Williams.

Berger's performance showed the narrow superiority of the McLarens on the stretched figure-of-eight track which features the only cross-over of any circuit on the Formula One calendar.

The afternoon session was run in bright sunshine but the day was overshadowed by an accident during the morning free session in which young Frenchman Eric Bernard broke his left leg.

Bernard, driving a Lola, spun and crashed and had to be lifted from the car before being stretchered away. He was taken to the circuit medical centre for treatment and later flown by helicopter to hospital.

Said Berger: "My first fast lap was a good one and my second was not bad up the point where I arrived at the Chicane."

Berger, like many of the drivers, said he did not like the revised chicane which slowed the cars drastically before the start-finish straight.

Senna, who secured a position on the front row of the grid five minutes before the end of the second session, said he had lost his clutch on his first run and that caused him severe braking problems.

Braves earn first World Series by beating Pirates

PITTSBURGH (R) — John Smoltz pitched a complete game shutout and Brian Hunter drove in three runs as the Atlanta Braves won their first National League title with a 4-0 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates on Thursday.

The Braves will open the best-of-seven World Series against the American League champion Minnesota Twins at Minnesota on Saturday, completing an improbable pair of Cinderella stories.

Both teams finished last in their divisions last year and Atlanta had the worst record in Major League Baseball, 65-97.

Smoltz's whitewash was a fitting climax to a series in which the Braves won three games by shutouts.

The 23-year-old right-hander, 2-0 in the National League Championship Series and the winning pitcher when the Braves clinched the Western Division title, extended the Pirates' scoreless streak at home to 27 innings.

They had not scored at Three Rivers Stadium since the eighth inning of their 5-1 opening game win.

Steve Avery, the 21-year-old left-hander who won two 1-0 gems for the Braves, was named the series Most Valuable Player.

The National League crown was the first championship of any sort for the city of Atlanta, including 25 years with the football Falcons, 25 years with the basketball Hawks and eight years with the hockey Flames.

Pirates starter and loser John Smiley failed to get out of the first inning, getting only two outs while giving up three hits, a walk and three earned runs for his second defeat of the series.

The Braves franchise, which moved to Atlanta in 1966, had last been in a World Series in 1958, when it was in Milwaukee. The Braves played in the World Series twice while in Boston and twice while in Milwaukee.

But this year's young Braves had their fans excited as never before. Even in the Pirates' home stadium, the imitator Indian chant of Braves fans could be heard throughout Game 7.

Smoltz allowed just six hits, walked one and struck out eight. He got Jose Lind to ground out to second for the final out of the game.

Lionie Smith led off the game with a walk and Terry Pendleton followed with a grounder just off the glove of a diving Lind at second base, sending Smith to third.

Ron Gant's sacrifice fly brought Smith home to make it 1-0 and after David Justice struck out, Hunter's homer just inside the left field foul pole brought Pendleton in for a 3-0 lead and drove Smiley out of the game. Bob Walk replaced him.

Hunter said of the home run: "It felt great. I was looking for a fast ball and I got it."

He added: "We thought maybe they would put their heads down a bit and we could put the pressure on them. They didn't put their heads down and they came back in the bottom of the first but we stopped them and we just kept going."

Pittsburgh failed to score in the home half of the inning after putting men on first and second with none out.

Orlando Merced and Jay Bell hit back-to-back singles but Pittsburgh's big three — Andy Van Slyke, Bobby Bonilla and Barry Bonds — again failed to deliver.

They were one for 36 in the series with men on base. They batted in only eight runs among them in this series and last year's, when the Pirates lost to the Cincinnati Reds.

The Braves added their final run in the fifth when Gant walked and stole second. After a walk to Justice, Hunter doubled sharply past third base for his third run batted in and the 4-0 final score.

Atlanta manager Bobby Cox said: "This proves once again that good pitching beats good hitting. You wish for shutouts and when you shut them out three times that says something."

Pittsburgh manager Jim Leyland was disappointed but said: "They are definitely the legitimate champions. They had to win two in our ballpark and they did it." The Braves had to win two in Pittsburgh after dropping two out of three at home.

"What a great story for baseball, from last place to the National League pennant," Leyland added.

Cram, Decker-Slaney win Sydney's mile

SYDNEY (AP) — England's Steve Cram and American Mary Decker-Slaney had Sydney's main street all to themselves Friday en route to easy victories in an inaugural mile run.

Cram and Decker-Slaney won't remember the race for their times — both over their personal bests — but for the huge crowd that lined the midtown route. Organisers estimated 200,000 people packed the George Street sidewalks.

"Unquestionably, that's the most number of people I've ever raced in front of," said Cram, whose time of 3 minutes, 57.44 seconds was more than 10 seconds off the current world record of 3:46.32 he set in July 1985.

Cram sped away from several

challengers at the 300-metre mark, leaving Australia's Simon Doyle and Darren Abbott to finish second and third.

Decker-Slaney's winning time of 4:24.4, off her personal best of 4:16.71, was still enough to give her a nine-second margin over the second-place woman, Angela Raines-White, a 17-year-old Australian. Another Australian, Jodie Nykist, was third.

Decker-Slaney, aiming for a 3,000-metre spot on the U.S. team for next year's Barcelona Olympics, said she was pleased to finish without injury.

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Sacchi takes over as Italian coach

ROME (R) — Arrigo Sacchi was named Italy's new national soccer coach Friday, replacing Azzeglio Vicini who this week bowed to pressure to resign.

The Italian Football Federation gave former AC Milan coach Sacchi official approval at a brief meeting at its Rome headquarters.

Sacchi, who plans a revolution in Italy's tactics and style of play, had already been widely tipped to take over from Vicini.

Vicini's downfall was sealed by a goalless draw against the Soviet Union in Moscow last Saturday which left Italy with only a remote chance of qualifying for

next year's European Championship finals in Sweden.

The result left the Soviet Union needing just one point in Cyprus next month to qualify ahead of Italy from Group 3.

Vicini had none of the charisma of his predecessor Enzo Bearzot whose side won the 1982 World Cup in Spain.

Though the team suffered only seven defeats in 54 matches under Vicini, they could not win a major championship. The 1988 European Championship and 1990 World Cup campaigns both came to grief in the semifinals.

The 58-year-old trainer's contract was due to run until June 1992 but on Tuesday Federation President Antonio Matarrese announced that Vicini was resigning.

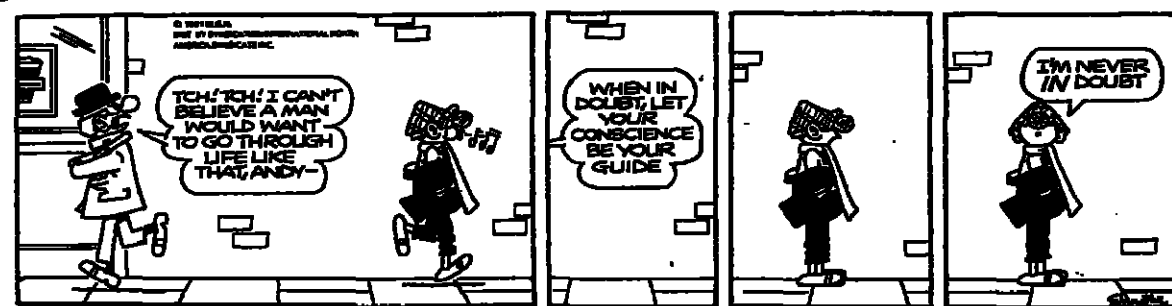
Matarrese has called for a new, more modern mentality with "men who are motivated, who haven't won much and who want to win a lot more."

Sacchi, who wants to model the national team on his former AC Milan side which won the European Cup in 1989 and 1990, is due to sign a contract — which Italy's sports press say is worth about one billion lire (\$1 million) a season — next Friday.

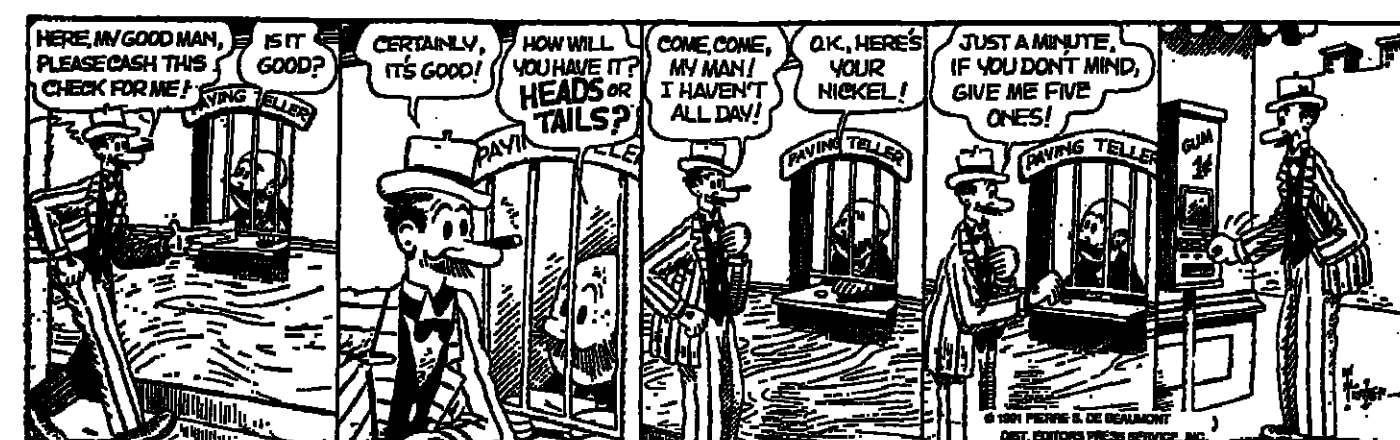
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1991

By Thomas S. Pearson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Argumentative and accidental aspects should be of no concern with today's EXCELLENT ASPECTS working on your behalf bringing you better health and the good will of those in power.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Make sure you don't get confused between practical and personal matters in the daytime but tonight is an unusually good time to get affairs in good order.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Now you have it in your power to show you do need to convince a doubting friend of your true loyalty and devotion, then tonight get off to social pleasures.

TAUROS: (April 20 to May 20) Avoid that public task or taking chances with a career interest until later when you can see those officials who can help with an assignment.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Whatever you have in mind that does not necessitate some better way to get ahead is good but later in the day is great for any new ideas you may have.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) There are some unfinished business for you to complete before you can go to that new system or new obligations you want to assume.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is your moment to show you are the one who is willing to wait until evening before making any foray into the outside world of new interests.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You certainly would be wise to

look over any writings and to make sure you say exactly what you mean today and tonight you will have new ideas.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You now have some very interesting matters by which to show you do value what partners expect of you by doing things you don't like to please some allies.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Now you have so many projects to do that you are apt to do them carelessly unless you make a special point to double-check what must be done.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have all kinds of interest in showing you are the one who does value the pleasures extended by those you like so be very friendly.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Now you find that it's up to you to do the things about the house that require attention but they are a bore and by doing so tonight finds new harmony.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Look to what needs to be done to get your usual duties, so arranged that you are able to gain the goodwill and active assistance of friendly allies.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"This month's phone bill weighs 37 pounds! Congratulations, you broke your old record!"

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NIYKK

YAFOR

CEEDIT

TORFIP



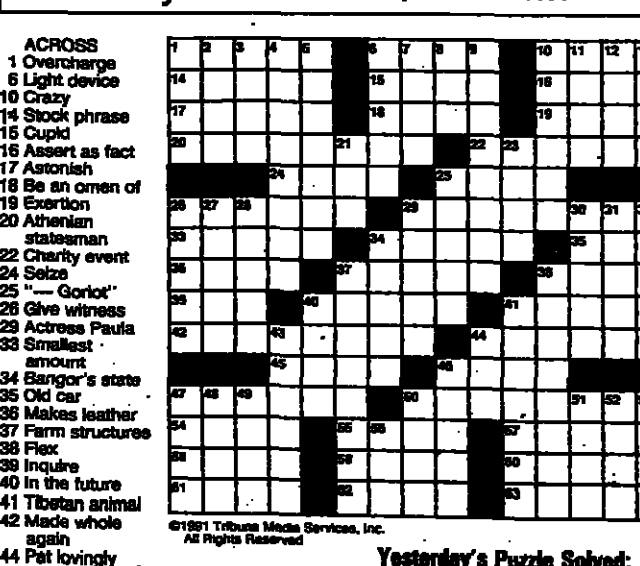
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: _____

Saturday's Jumbles: ELOPE POKER TURNIP MISERY

Answer: The first thing you lose when you go on a diet — YOUR TEMPER

THE Daily Crossword by Robert O. Wilson



Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS
1 Overcharge
6 Light device
10 Crazy
14 Stock phrase
15 Cupid
16 Assured as fact
17 Astonish
18 Be an omen of
19 Erection
20 Athenian statesman
22 Charity event
24 Selah
25 "— Goriot"
26 Give witness
28 Actress Paula
33 Smallest amount
34 Bangor's state
35 Old car
36 Makes leather
37 Farm structures
38 Fiat
39 Inquire
40 In the future
41 Tibetan animal
42 Made whole again
44 Pat lovingly
45 Ova
46 Wild of song
47 Black Sea peninsula
50 Choral compositions
54 Dwell (on)
55 Shortly
57 Senseless
58 Monogram part: abbr.
59 Supplementary material
60 Brilliance
61 Football play
62 Butcher
63 Seasons
DOWN
1 Easy chore
2 Crow in the mind
3 Amorello
4 Sloth
5 Prepared in advance
6 Tag
7 Help, prophet
8 Up-to-date
9 Children
10 Contrivance
11 Eager
12 Check
13 Ch-ch
21 Landed
22 Br. composer
23 Abbey man
26 Church area
27 Pastor
28 Storage containers
29 Lost color
30 Castle
31 Transmits
32 Fountain treats
34 Tiny things
37 Gutweed
38 Sheep-scaled gully
40 Theater section
41 Social gatherings
43 Enclave
44 Food container
45 Poem division
47 Golf shot
48 Frog genus
51 Of great height
52 Med. school study
53 Bridge defects
56 Lubricant

Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE Date: 16/10/91	TOKYO CLOSE Date: 17/10/91
Sterling Pound	1.7080	1.7103
Deutsche Mark	1.7057	1.7068
Swiss Franc	1.4905	1.4863
French Franc	5.8130	5.8077
Japanese Yen	139.70	139.55
European Currency Unit	1.2010	1.2033

USD Per STG
European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.18	5.31	5.31	5.43
Sterling Pound	10.50	10.25	10.18	10.06
Deutsche Mark	9.06	9.25	9.25	9.25
Swiss Franc	8.06	8.25	8.18	8.06
French Franc	9.06	9.18	9.25	9.31
Japanese Yen	6.53	6.34	6.03	5.81
European Currency Unit	9.56	9.75	9.75	9.75

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	357.95	7.05	Silver	4.11	0.092

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6880	0.6880
Sterling Pound	1.1728	1.1787
Deutsche Mark	0.4028	0.4048
Swiss Franc	0.4612	0.4635
French Franc	0.1182	0.1183
Japanese Yen	0.5292	0.5318
Dutch Guilder	0.3574	0.3592
Swedish Krona	0.1107	0.1113
Italian Lira	0.0539	0.0542
Belgian Franc	0.01958	0.01968

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7900	1.8000
Lebanese Lira	0.0774	0.0777
Saudi Riyal	0.1826	0.1835
Kuwaiti Dinar	—	—
Qatari Riyal	0.1840	0.1870
Egyptian Pound	0.2050	0.2180
Omani Riyal	1.7560	1.7700
UAE Dirham	0.1860	0.1870
Greek Drachma	0.3677	0.3730
Cypriot Pound	1.4650	1.4650

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Markets

Index	16/10/91	Close	15/10/91	Close
All-Share	123.06		122.23	
Banking Sector	104.21		102.88	
Insurance Sector	125.56		125.02	
Industry Sector	151.56		151.43	
Services Sector	131.55		131.31	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.7160/70	U.S. dollar	
One U.S. dollar	1.1284/89	Canadian dollar	
	1.6957/58	Deutsche mark	
	1.9105/15	Dutch guilder	
	1.4835/37	Swiss franc	
	34.87/82	Belgian franc	
	5.7700/50	French franc	
	1266/1126	Italian lire	
	129.60/90	Japanese yen	
	6.1750/1800	Swedish crown	
	6.6350/6400	Norwegian crown	
	6.5310/60	Danish crown	
One ounce of gold	360.15/360.65	U.S. dollars	

Norway launches \$2b rescue package for troubled banks

OSLO (R) — Norway's minority Labour government Thursday launched a major rescue package to save the troubled banking sector and said the state had taken over the country's technically-bankrupt second largest bank.

The 13 billion crown (\$1.95 billion) package, which has to be approved by parliament, also opened the way for the state to take a stake in other banks as well as Christiania Bank og Kreditkas — generally known as Kreditkassen.

"The outline which has been presented here secures further operation of Kreditkassen by letting the state bank guarantee fund go in with equity capital and take over ownership responsibility for the bank," Finance Minister Sigbjørn Johnsen told parliament.

"It is our goal to bring in new private owners to contribute to renewal and increased confidence in the bank. It will however take time before this is a realistic option," he added.

Mr. Johnsen said the government would top up the state bank guarantee fund with six billion crowns (\$900 million).

The fund was set up earlier this year with five billion crowns

(\$750 million), about half of which has already been spent to prop up ailing banks.

Kreditkassen will now have to apply to the fund for more cash. A finance ministry statement said the state bank guarantee fund measures would extend its aid to banks in crisis by buying directly into shares issued by commercial banks.

Earlier this week, Kreditkassen said the bank was technically bankrupt after heavy losses wiped out its private share capital.

Kreditkassen Thursday said it needed 5-6 billion crowns in core capital to meet new capital adequacy regulations from the end of 1992.

"The bank's economic development in the third quarter has the result that the bank's share capital, free funds and preference capital is lost," Kreditkassen said in a statement.

Kreditkassen and other Norwegian banks have lost money heavily in recent years, partly due to a sharp fall in the property market and economic turmoil in the wake of a fall in North Sea oil prices in 1986.

Tougher international requirements for capital adequacy have

also worsened the banks' situation.

The government also said it wanted to set up a state investment firm which, in cooperation with private investors, could supply Norwegian banks with fresh cash.

"A new government institution will be established with a capital of 4.5 billion crowns (\$675 million), with the objective of participating in new equity issues from private banks," the finance ministry said.

The government would also make it cheaper for the banks to borrow money from the central bank.

"This will reduce interest costs by 1.1 billion crowns (\$165 million) a year," the ministry said.

The banks would for instance be allowed to borrow a total of 25 billion crowns (\$3.75 billion) at six per cent from the central bank.

The government also said that required payments by the banks to commercial and savings banks guarantee funds would be reduced by 75 per cent next year.

This would save the banks 700 million crowns (\$105 million) in 1992.

World Bank 'to make lot of noise' on freer markets

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — The World Bank has urged industrial nations that have been preaching free world trade to speed the opening of their markets to developing countries.

"We will keep the pressure on. We're going to make a lot of noise until we have a successful Uruguay Round," said Alejandro Portes, who heads the bank's development committee.

A committee said committee members were disturbed at the continued delay in concluding the

Uruguay Round of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) talks, which aims to promote free trade.

The talks have been stalled because of disagreements among industrial nations on eliminating costly subsidies to agriculture and industry.

The committee, which advises the leadership of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the developing world, said there would be continued need for highly concessional aid

to low-income countries.

The committee said the nations would not be diverted in support of economic reforms in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

At a news conference, Mr. Portes added that a conflict between aid to the former communist countries and traditional recipients of World Bank aid was not foreseen.

The committee asked donor nations, especially those not meeting a bank-set target, to increase their transfer of resources to developing countries. The bank recommends that donors provide 0.7 per cent of their gross national products for development aid.

Amman Financial Market weekly trading

Following is a summary of trading during last week and the previous week:

	Oct. 12-16	Oct. 5-9
Daily average	JD 1,201,689	JD 1,722,215
Total volume	JD 6,888,447	JD 8,611,875
Total shares	2,489,836	2,852,687
No. Of contracts	3,97	4,255

Sectoral trading:

Industrial	JD 4,854,978 (67.5%)	JD 3,721,895 (43.2%)
Financial	JD 1,424,535 (23.7%)	JD 4,332,699 (50.3%)

Service	(7.4%)	(5.9%)
Insurance	(1.4%)	(0.6%)
Share price index	133.6	133.5
No. of companies	73	74
Price movement (rise)	41	46
(Decline)	22	17
(Stable)	10	11

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — The Nikkei average was up 454.97 points to 24,894.82, with about 500 million shares traded.

SYDNEY — The market closed higher, consolidating on a week of hectic trading which saw the leading index leap 4.0 per cent. The All Ordinaries closed at 1,617.6, up 5.1 points.

BOMBAY — Share prices finished modestly higher after a bullish opening session triggered profit-taking. The Bombay Stock Exchange index ended up 5.44 at 1,778.91.

FRANKFURT — Analysts' downgradings of industry profit forecasts pushed the DAX index down 1.26 points to 1,563.25.

ZURICH — Pharmaceuticals group Roche and food group Nestle lead the SPI index in a 7.5 rise to 1,098.3.

PARIS — The CAC-40 index tracked Wall Street to close at 1,864.2, up 8.73.

LONDON — Modest gains on Wall Street helped the FTSE index rise 12.4 to 2,601.1. Sentiment was earlier depressed by news that less than half of a Hillsdown rights issue was taken up.

NEW YORK — Firms bonds and better hopes on earnings helped U.S. blue chips. At 1633 GMT the Dow Jones industrials were up 14.76 to 3,067.76.

EC eyes water, tourism and private sector for 4th protocol with Jordan

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Water resources and management and tourism development as well as support for private sector enterprises are the key areas singled out for European community (EC) assistance to Jordan to be finalised early next month.

The assistance falls under an agreement signed in June this year and formally called the fourth protocol which provides for a total EC assistance of 126 million European Currency Units — ECUs — (\$138.6 million).

About one third of the amount — 44 million ECUs (\$48.4 million) — will be in outright grants, 80 million ECUs (\$88 million) in subsidised soft loans and two million ECUs (\$2.2 million) will be granted as risk capital for businesses.

The EC delegation and the planning ministry are working on allocations under the protocol and a meeting in Brussels of EC foreign ministers in the first week of November is expected to finalise the details.

According to Jean-Pierre Pierard, economic counsellor at the EC delegate's office in Amman, the key provisions of the final accord are expected to include a "master plan" for water resources and management in Jordan; finding new resources; improving the handling of available resources and ensuring optimum utilisation.

The emphasis given to water comes in line with the growing sense of urgency in Jordan, which has been trading "the red line" in trying to meet its water needs

for the past three years.

Tourism development projects and support for private sector enterprises are also expected to be singled out under the EC assistance programme, Mr. Pierard said.

However, Mr. Pierard believes that a better information system has to be set up for the private sector assistance programme to be most effective. Preliminary plans hover around 20 million ECUs (\$22.2 million) as the amount that could be set aside for this purpose.

In general, Mr. Pierard told the Jordan Times, there is a lack of awareness among Jordanian businessmen of the existence of the programme, channels and procedures to use the assistance and how best to utilise it.

"A mechanism has to be established where businessmen are made aware of the programme and of the proper procedures and advised how to take advantage of the various facilities offered," he said.

Mr. Pierard is a strong advocate of creating an "EC-Jordan Chamber of Commerce" for this purpose. "Such a body will be the most natural and ideal organisation to handle the private sector programme and the EC stands ready to finance its initialisation," he said.

In view of the high volume of Jordanian imports from EC countries — according for 30 per cent of the Kingdom's annual procurements from abroad — there is a lot of scope for the private sector programme to be used up.

While no real problem is expected to snag the finalisation of the assistance agreement in Brussels next month, diplomatic sources

next month, diplomatic sources say that Britain might bring up the subject of a Jordanian ban on importation of cows from Britain.

The British argument is that a recent international meeting attended by Jordan found that a threat of the "crazy cow disease" in Britain is no longer valid, but the Kingdom has not repealed the ban on British cows.

"British is an influential member of the Community and can, if it chooses, to raise the issue of the ban at the Brussels meeting," said a diplomatic source.

No Jordanian official was immediately available for comment. EC Commission assistance to Jordan since 1977 until Oct. 31, 1991 under the first, second and third protocols involved a total of 203 million ECUs (\$223 million) and covered most sectors, including education, agriculture, industry, science, infrastructure and energy and tourism as well as technical aid.

Eight-five million ECUs (\$93.5 million) were in the form of grants and soft loans and the rest in loans from the European Investment Bank (EIB), the commercial arm of the Community.

The European Commission while loans are granted by the EIB under commercial terms but the commission will subsidise the interest rates by two per cent. The EC Commission aid is independent of bilateral assistance granted by individual EC member states. In January 1991, the commission granted 150 million ECUs (\$165 million) as assistance to Jordan as part of its pledge to assist the countries worst hit by the Gulf crisis.

Tehran seeks \$24b financing for development programmes

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — Iran is seeking more foreign investment to diversify its oil-based economy and expand into international export market, the Iranian finance minister has said.

Mehsen Noorbakhsh told the annual conference of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund that the Islamic republic was seeking \$27 billion foreign sources to finance development programmes.

"As a non-debt-creating financial flow, we would also welcome foreign investments that could be made in the context of joint ventures between foreign and Iranian companies," he said.

He cited areas such as petroleum, agriculture, industry and petrochemicals as possible investment opportunities.

Iran has been seeking to expand its trade contacts with the rest of the world and rebuild its economy after the turmoil which followed the 1979 ouster of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and the bloody war with Iraq.

Mr. Noorbakhsh said the Tehran government was accelerating reforms, including reducing the number of exchange rates, liberalising prices, transferring companies from state to private control and balancing the state budget.

"Transfer of public enterprises to the private sector in the context of privatisation policies has also proceeded rapidly," Mr. Noorbakhsh said. "More than 90 per cent of the shares traded on Tehran's stock exchange over the past six months belonged to government-held companies."

He said the government's goal in encouraging investments from abroad "would be to absorb advanced technology and achieve access to new export markets."

Mr. Noorbakhsh cited natural resources, geographic location and skilled labour "gaining in quality and quantity as more expatriates are returning" as advantages which Iran could offer to foreign investors.

Despite tensions in the Middle East, Mr. Noorbakhsh said Iran's economy grew by 10.5 per cent last year and that inflation had been reduced from 27.4 per cent to nine per cent.

Non-oil exports had also increased by 31 per cent during recent years, he added.



Mehsen Noorbakhsh

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When Harry Met Sally

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 625155

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Tom Selleck in

HER ALIBI

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Yugoslav army attacks continue in Croatia despite new ceasefire

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Fierce fighting raged through-out secessionist Croatia early Friday, and thousands of refugees fled the violence.

Another ceasefire was agreed upon Friday, following nine that have failed.

Artillery exchanges were reported around the besieged Croatian Danube River town of Vukovar and in central Croatia around Novska and Nova Gradiska.

Radio Belgrade claimed that Serbian-dominated federal forces and Serb rebels had repelled Croatian attacks in those areas and had advanced in several sectors.

The Croatian government said it had no complete and reliable casualty figures, but 15 to 20 people were believed to have been killed and dozens injured in action across the secessionist republic.

At the peace negotiations Friday in the Hague, a Dutch Foreign Ministry official said a truce was agreed — the 10th such effort to halt the fighting.

The Foreign Ministry official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Serbian and Croatian presidents both ordered an immediate halt to hostilities. However, previous ceasefires

have collapsed quickly.

In a smaller-scale accord, the army and Croatian officials agreed on a new attempt to send a medical relief convoy to Vukovar, Croatia's deputy defence minister said. An EC-led convoy failed to reach Vukovar's centre Monday and turned back.

A Croatian official, Stjepan Adamic, also said the Croats and the army had agreed on a ceasefire in and around Vukovar, set to begin Friday afternoon and last through the weekend.

Vukovar has been cut off from the rest of Croatia for about a month. No outsider has been known to visit since then.

Non-Communist Croatia, which declared independence on June 25 along with neighbouring Slovenia, fears expansionism by Socialist Serbia, the largest of Yugoslavia's six republics which dominates the central government and military.

More than 1,000 people have died in the ethnic fighting in Croatia, where ethnic Serbs increasingly backed by the federal army have seized more than one-third of the republic.

The latest onslaught apparently reflected the desire of the federal army and Serb rebels to weaken Croatian resolve.

In the latest violence:

— Vukovar and its suburbs were again under army fire early Friday, said defence officials, confirming a radio report.

— Vinkovci, another Croatian city, was being shelled and the local hospital, already badly damaged, was again hit, the officials said.

— Pakrac in central Croatia, scene of battles over the last few days, was rocketed by Yugoslav Air Force planes Friday morning, the Defence Ministry in Zagreb said. It gave no casualty figures.

— An artillery attack was launched on Nova Gradiska, about 140 kilometres south of Zagreb, where Croatian radio said nine people were killed in fighting Thursday. There was no official confirmation.

Belgrade Radio said artillery fire also was reported during the night on the approaches to the medieval walled city of Dubrovnik, a tourist centre on Croatia's southern coast.

Villages north of Dubrovnik were under an infantry attack and shells fell close to the old town harbour Friday, Croatian Radio said, but defence officials did not provide details of damage or casualties.

Army units were reported in Belgrade to have advanced to Plat, only eight kilometres from Dubrovnik, which is considered one of the best surviving examples of medieval architecture in Europe.

The city's walled medieval centre was not hit, said the Yugoslav News Agency, Tanjug.

On Thursday, up to 8,000 Croat men, women and children were evacuated from Ilok, a Croatian town 32 kilometres downstream from Vukovar. Ilok lies on an indefensible spit of land jutting deep into Serbia.

About 600 Croatian policemen and 400 members of the republic's paramilitary National Guard joined the exodus after surrendering hundreds of automatic rifles, machine guns and mortars to a company of federal military policemen.

More than 300,000 people on both sides have fled their homes since Croatia's secessionist war erupted nearly four months ago, Tanjug said Wednesday.

Many of Croatia's 600,000 Serbs say they do not want to remain in an independent Croatia, fearing they will suffer a similar fate as the thousands slaughtered by Croatia's Nazi puppet government in World War II.

Armenian nationalist wins presidency in landslide

YEREVAN, Soviet Union (R) — A former political prisoner who says he will lead Armenia to full independence from Moscow has won the republic's first presidential election by a landslide.

Levon Ter-Petrosyan won 83.03 per cent of the vote in Wednesday's poll, according to preliminary results from all 66 electoral regions, election officials said Friday. His nearest rival, Fahir Hachikyan, won 7.21 per cent in a 70.42 per cent turnout.

Ter-Petrosyan means stable politics and dynamic firm movement towards independence, Armenian Prime Minister Grigori Bagratyan said in an interview.

Ter-Petrosyan's idea of a balanced policy that gives a real guarantee of security and transition to independence and economic autonomy, parliamentarianism, said Ter-Petrosyan.

Syrian-born Ter-Petrosyan, a calm, scholarly man who speaks 10 languages, was jailed for six months in 1988-89 for propagating Armenian nationalism.

He became chairman of parliament last year after nationalists defeated Armenia's Communists in elections.

The 46-year-old leader has since carefully steered the secession campaign that culminated in a more than 90 per cent "yes" vote in a referendum last month and the declaration of immediate independence by parliament within two days.

A Christian land surrounded by Muslim neighbours — Turkey, Iran and Azerbaijan — Armenia has suffered a long history of invasion and occupation.

It last briefly enjoyed independence from 1918 until 1920, when it joined the Soviet Union. No country has so far established diplomatic relations with Armenia.

But Mr. Bagratyan says: "Sooner or later it (the West) will recognise our political independence. A people which had its own state 2,000 years ago certainly has the right to it in our times."

Third in the election, with 4.32 per cent of the vote, was Sos Serkisyanyan of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, which ruled the republic from 1918 to 1920 and enjoyed wide support among the many millions of Armenians spread throughout the world.

An emotive issue in an otherwise low-key campaign was Armenia's claim to Nagorno-Karabakh — a largely Armenian enclave inside neighbouring Azerbaijan.

More than 800 people have been killed in three years of clashes over the enclave.

In Moscow, the president of Azerbaijan, Ayaz Matalibov, refused to attend a meeting with Mr. Ter-Petrosyan.

NATO: No nuclear-free Europe despite big cuts

TAORMINA, Sicily (R) — NATO Secretary-General Manfred Woerner said Friday Europe could never become a nuclear-free zone despite landmark decisions to make huge cuts in the Soviet and alliance arsenals.

Mr. Woerner and some NATO defence ministers, including U.S. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney, also insisted the U.S.-led alliance would remain in charge of Western security and raised questions about a controversial Franco-German plan to set up a more independent European force.

"Nuclear weapons will never be dismantled," Mr. Woerner told a news conference at the end of a two-day alliance defence ministers meeting in this Sicilian resort.

"That is why I do not foresee a situation where we will denounce the rise of Europe," he added. "These weapons provide the ultimate guarantee of our security," Mr. Cheney agreed.

The ministers decided at the meeting to slash NATO's nuclear arsenal of more than 3,500 warheads by 80 per cent, because of the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union has announced similar plans.

But the ministers said they needed to keep a few hundred nuclear aircraft bombs to guarantee peace in Europe.

Mr. Woerner said the decision was an important step on the way to a Rome summit of alliance leaders next month, which will give formal blessing to a new NATO strategy for the post-cold war era.

Nuclear weapons would continue to be stationed in various NATO nations and no alliance member basing nuclear arms on its soil had indicated it would change that policy, he added.

Most of NATO's nuclear arsenal in Europe is based in Germany, the old cold war front line. But warheads are also stored in Britain, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Greece and Turkey. The 16-nation Western alliance

has managed to avoid for now a potentially divisive debate about whether to station a new generation of U.S. air-launched missiles in Europe. President George Bush last month cancelled the development programme for the weapon.

But Mr. Cheney made clear the option to develop such weapons could remain open in future, although there were no plans to do so and was no need to discuss the question for several years.

"We, together with our allies, agree that there is still a requirement to address the question of new stand-off weapons," he said. Such missiles can be fired by aircraft several hundred kilometres from the target, hence the name "stand-off."

Mr. Woerner, Mr. Cheney and British Defence Secretary Tom King all denied there had been any acrimony over a new Franco-German plan to create a European army under the command of the nine-nation Western European Union (WEU) and subordinated to the European Community, which currently has no role in defence.

Britain and the United States have expressed concern that such a force could undermine NATO by setting up a rival institution and by weakening trans-Atlantic links that are the lifeblood of the alliance.

"NATO is and remains responsible for the security and defence of its member countries," Mr. Woerner said.

"Whatever is done... should not detract from, or undermine, or in any way weaken NATO," Mr. Cheney said. The United States remained committed to keeping forces in Europe, but wanted to maintain that relationship only through "bedrock" of NATO.

Meanwhile, French officials said Thursday, Franco-German army corps which could serve as the basis for a European army independent of NATO is to number between 35,000 and 40,000 men.

16 die in French train crash

MELUN, France (AP) — A passenger train on an overnight trip from the Riviera to Paris smashed head-on into a freight train early Thursday, killing at least 16 people and injuring more than 50, authorities said.

The freight train rolled through a signal light and crossed into the passenger train's path while switching tracks. The signal was in good working order but it was not immediately known whether the light was red or green at the time.

Among those killed was the engineer of the 12-car, 900-ton freight train, which carried metal cables, beams and other cargo.

The passenger train was knocked off the rails in the 6:30 a.m. crash near the station in Melun, 48 kilometres southeast of Paris. It had originated in Nice and included four sleeper cars and several cars carrying automobiles.

The impact was so powerful that the first sleeper car hurtled

on top of the locomotive pulling it.

Mr. Fournier, reviving speed figures given earlier by other officials said both trains were travelling between 60 and 70 kilometres per hour at the time of the crash. However, the black box recovered later from the passenger train showed it was rolling at only 38 director kilometres per hour.

Lt. Col. Guy Bernoux, director of the rescue effort, said passengers in the first car suffered the highest casualty rate. Rescue workers had to use ladders to climb into the shredded wreckage atop the engine in search of victims.

"Some of the injured were totally panicked, and we had to comfort them before we could evacuate them," Col. Bernoux said.

Transport Minister Paul Quilès arrived at the site at mid-morning and announced that an inquiry would be launched immediately.

Commonwealth agrees on phased lifting of S. Africa sanctions

HARARE (R) — A summit of Commonwealth leaders has unanimously agreed to the phased lifting of sanctions against South Africa, Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao said Friday.

The first stage would be an immediate end to a ban on people-to-people contacts, Mr. Rao told a news conference on the third day of the 50-nation Commonwealth summit.

This would allow resumption of tourism, cultural and academic exchanges and air links with white-ruled South Africa, ostracised internationally for three decades for pursuing a policy of racial segregation in the predominantly black country.

Mr. Rao said the summit endorsed recommendations from a Commonwealth foreign ministers' meeting in Delhi last month for an immediate end to people-to-people sanctions and the graduated lifting of other sanctions as the democratisation process proceeded in South Africa.

He said Commonwealth leaders — long in the forefront of the campaign against apartheid — "welcomed the substantial progress that has been achieved in

South Africa."

"This trend needs to be encouraged," Mr. Rao added.

"But at the same time there is a clear and sober realisation that much needs to be done before the structure of apartheid is completely dismantled in South Africa and the country emerges as a truly democratic non-racial country with its people enjoying universal suffrage and representation in government."

For this reason, he said, "virtually all Commonwealth heads of government agreed to a graduated approach to lifting sanctions."

Asked if there had been some disagreement or reservations, Mr. Rao said the leaders had unanimously agreed on the foreign ministers' recommendations.

The Commonwealth is considering sending a mission to South Africa to discuss helping its transition to non-racial democracy, a British official said Friday.

He said Britain supported the proposal by Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Ekele Anyaoku of Nigeria at the organisation's biennial conference in Harare.

Leaders of the 50-nation body would consider the proposal during a weekend retreat at the Victoria Falls, he said.

The British official said Anyaoku would probably head the mission, which would "discuss with the parties themselves how they believe the Commonwealth might help."

Meanwhile, police firing tear gas chased with students for the second day running Friday, raiding Harare University to crush anti-government protests at the Commonwealth summit.

Riot police who sealed off the university Wednesday after students tried to march on the summit venue stormed the campus and flushed protesters out of dormitories with tear gas.

The students, who accuse the government of President Robert Mugabe of restricting academic freedom, said four of their leaders were arrested and placed in security police custody.

The protests began the day after Mr. Mugabe opened the summit with exhortations to the 50 Commonwealth members to practise the human rights values that they preach.

A day after massacre, U.S. House rejects new gun controls

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. House of Representatives has overwhelmingly rejected controls on rapid-fire weaponry barely 24 hours after a deranged gunman massacred 22 people in Killeen, Texas, and then killed himself.

The controls were part of a wide-ranging crime bill being debated by the House, members voted 247-177 to strip them from the legislation despite appeals from the Texas congressman whose district includes Killeen and from other members whose constituents have suffered from random killing sprees.

Consideration of the election-season "tough on crime" bill is continuing next week.

At issue was a provision that would have banned 13 specific U.S.-made semi-automatic assault weapons and high capacity magazines.

George J. Hennard, 35, used a 9mm Glock pistol from an Austrian gun manufacturer that was fed by a 17-bullet clip when he shot down customers crowded into Luby's Cafeteria. The bill would have set a seven-bullet limit on magazines.

He also had a 9mm Ruger. Opponents of the legislation complained it would be unfair to hunters and abide Americans' right to bear arms. They also charged the provisions were poorly drafted and vague.

In an appeal for the controls Representative Charles Schumer of New York told members: "The nation is watching to see how the House will react to the carnage. This House will decide today whether they died in vain."

Meanwhile, hundreds of people went to memorial services for the 22 victims of the suicidal gunman described by police and former acquaintances as a vindictive loner who may have nursed a violent rage against women.

Much remained a mystery two days after George Hennard, a 35-year-old doctor's son, drove his pickup truck through the window of Luby's Cafeteria and began firing two semiautomatic pistols at a lunchtime crowd. The Wednesday afternoon rampage ended when Mr. Hennard, wounded by police fire, killed himself.

Interviews with former associates revealed Mr. Hennard was a difficult man who had spent much of his life wandering the world as a seaman until he was thrown out of the merchant marine in 1989 for smoking marijuana.

"He was very vindictive," said Isaiah Williams, a branch agent for the National Maritime Union in San Pedro, California. "He always wanted to straighten out the score. He acted like he didn't confide in anybody or trust in anybody."

The Coast Guard, which stripped Mr. Hennard of his merchant mariner papers, released documents Thursday stating he had undergone voluntary drug treatment at a Houston hospital.

At the gunman's home in nearby Belton, his father said he did not know what caused his son to go on Wednesday's rampage.

"It was not drugs, that's for sure," said George M. Hennard, a Houston doctor.

Hun Sen backs Sihanouk as president

BANGKOK (AP) — Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen has proposed that his party back national reconciliation figure Prince Norodom Sihanouk for president in future elections, the official Cambodian News Agency (SPK) reported Friday.

If adopted, the proposal would mean dropping the colourful President Heng Samrin, who has had the post since Vietnamese troops invaded the country in late 1978 and installed the Pnom Penh government. Heng Samrin also heads the party.

Hun Sen spoke Wednesday at the opening of an extraordinary congress designed to shift his Marxist party to a liberal democratic footing in anticipation of multiparty elections. Next week, the government is to sign a peace treaty with three guerrilla groups.

At the congress, the name of the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea (Cambodia) was changed to the Cambodian People's Party.

The SPK report, monitored in Bangkok, quoted Mr. Hun Sen as saying in his speech that he was

worried that no single party would win enough votes in the election to form a government.

He said his party wanted to see stability restored in the country and to cooperate with other parties.

"Given the fact that Prince Norodom Sihanouk does not side with any political party or faction, that he is the chairman of the Supreme National Council, and that he embodies the required potential to reconcile various parties, I propose that our party support Prince Sihanouk's candidacy in future presidential elections," Mr. Hun Sen said.

"I am convinced that is the reasonable formula to prevent a new political crisis," he said.

The Supreme National Council is a reconciliation body comprising leaders of all four factions. It is to help guide the nation during the period leading up to the U.N.-supervised elections.

Meanwhile Khmer Rouge guerrillas Friday heeded strong protests by the United Nations and apparently retreated from a plan to push 43,000 refugees into

dangerous rebel-held areas of Cambodia.

The Marxist guerrillas earlier had told refugees at the Site 8 Camp in Thailand to cross into Cambodia this month, instead of waiting for U.N.-assisted repatriation.

They apparently wanted to keep control over the refugees for use in elections mandated by the Cambodian peace treaty to be signed next week in Paris.

Strong protests by U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and many other parties caused the Khmer Rouge to pull back, diplomats at the United Nations said.

Site 8, which is Khmer Rouge-controlled, and other Cambodian refugee camps along Thailand's eastern border with Cambodia are sided by the U.N. Border Relief Operation, or UNBRO.

The Khmer Rouge army radio Friday quoted a statement from the guerrilla battlefield command in the area saying that refugees who already had returned to Cambodia from Site 8 did so voluntarily.

German states take steps to curb asylum

BONN (R) — The German government has reached agreement with interior ministers from the country's 16 regional states on measures to cut the number of foreigners who seek asylum here.

Ministers from the states also pledged to do everything in their power to combat a wave of vicious attacks on foreigners by neo-Nazi gangs.

They approved a plan obliging the states to house asylum-seekers in large camps and decide within six weeks whether to deport them. At present, cases can drag on for years as unsuccessful applicants appeal through the courts.

The plan was agreed last week by Christian Democratic (CDU) Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Social Democratic (SPD) opposition, who are in power in 10 of the 16 states and have a law-blocking majority in the upper house of parliament in Bonn.

But a joint statement in issued after Thursday's talks made clear that the CDU and SPD remained deeply divided on how to tackle the asylum problem. A record 200,000 applicants are expected this year.

"There remain deep differences of opinion on reform of asylum law," the statement said. "In particular, the states governed by the CDU still believe a change in the constitution is necessary."

Mr. Kohl wants to tighten a unique provision in Bonn's 1949 constitution which says that anyone who faces political persecution has a right to asylum in Germany.

He believes that most of those who come here — of whom only around five per cent are granted asylum — are in reality economic migrants seeking a new life in wealthy Germany.

The SPD opposes any tampering with the constitution and is denying Mr. Kohl the two-thirds parliamentary majority he needs.

The CDU has seized on attacks by right-wing skinheads on refugees from Eastern Europe and the Third World as evidence that the influx of foreigners has to be stopped.

Alwin Ziel, interior minister in Brandenburg, issued a statement on behalf of all 16 states condemning the recent attacks and urging Germans to help protect foreigners.

"The... ministers confirm their determination to combat the causes of hostility to foreigners effectively and to counter displays of hatred and violence with all legal means at their disposal," he said.

He urged police to increase protection at hotels for asylum-seekers and step up surveillance of skinheads.

COLUMN

Fake nun steals show at Pope's meeting with Collor

BRASILIA, Brazil (R) — A woman in nun's habit with a beaming smile tricked Pope John Paul, security police and Brazil's president this week to kneel before the Pontiff and receive his personal blessing in the presidential palace. The woman, who had a pass allowing her inside the palace with several hundreds of other guests during the Pope's visit there Monday, broke through security, threw herself at the Pope's feet and kissed his hand. The Pope smiled and blessed the woman, who wore a blue and white nun's habit, as President Fernando Collor de Mello looked on beaming. Pictures of the radiant nun, the Pope said the president made the front pages of the Brazilian press. But on Thursday, presidential spokesman Claudio Humberto Silva said the woman was actually an ex-nun named Salete Maria Vieira who used her former work clothes and beaming smile to win a blessing from the Pope. He said she had approached Collor at a public event last weekend, introduced herself as belonging to a Rio de Janeiro convent and persuaded the president to give her a pass to the reception for the Pope.

Woman jailed for trying to kill husband

SYDNEY (R) — An Australian woman who tried to kill her husband by poisoning his milk and orange juice, hitting him with a rock and a cricket bat and stabbing him with a knife, was sentenced to 12 years in jail Friday. Roseanne Catt, 44, had single-mindedly tried to destroy her husband Barry Catt "figuratively and physically," said Sydney Supreme Court Judge Jane Matthews in passing sentence. She was found guilty on Sept. 11 on eight charges, including malicious wounding, attempting to poison her husband and soliciting other men to kill him. The prosecution said Mrs. Catt wanted her husband dead so she could take over his successful car repair business at Taree on the northern New South Wales coast. Eleven days after their 1987 marriage Roseanne had Barry admitted to a mental institution. She also tried to have him convicted on charges of sexually assaulting his children. "She'd have to be worse than Satan if Satan was a woman," a smiling Barry Catt told reporters outside the court.

Love made panda happy to the end

MEXICO CITY (R) — Chia Chia, Britain's only giant panda who died Sunday while on loan to a Mexico City Zoo, found love near the end of his life and expired after a whispered conversation with his mate, the zoo's director said Thursday. "The last two years of his life were the happiest of all," Maria Elena Hoyos, director of the Mexico City Zoo, said. Two years ago, Chia-Chia mated with 10-year-old Tohri, leading to the birth of Xin-Xin (Hope), the only cub ever naturally conceived and born in captivity. For safety's sake he never had contact with the delicate one-year-old cub, but he could see it in the adjacent pen, Hoyos said. "Early Sunday morning, before he passed away, Chia-Chia huddled close to Tohri and spoke to her. It is impossible to translate what he said, but he knew that he would not be around a lot longer," she said. Chia-Chia had been in Mexico for three years, after first being sent to Britain's London Zoo from China in 1974. He also aired a cut-throat artificial insemination in Madrid.

Exams can make you sick, expert says

SYDNEY (R) — School examinations can really make you sick especially if you're a girl, an Australian psychologist has said. Robert Kirby of Melbourne's La Trobe University Behavioural Health Sciences Department said stomach aches, muscle tension, headaches and loss of sleep were the most common complaints. Mr. Kirby questioned 404 students aged 13 to 17 at a secondary school in Melbourne. "We found girls are more anxious than boys about exams," he told Reuters. "They get sicker before exams, they're less confident on how they will do, but when you look at the results they both come out with identical results." Mr. Kirby said the way girls are brought up is largely to blame for their lack of confidence. "Men are encouraged to take risks while women are warned about the dangers," he said.

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